Social Origins of the Asante Traditional Administrators: 1700-1900

By

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ABSTRACT

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The social origins of the Asante traditional administrators has been studied through extensive use of oral traditions, primary and secondary sources in Ghana and overseas archives and libraries. Comparison of pre-nineteenth century Akan administrative-related institutions on the coast with similar Asante institutions provided indispensable background to our understanding of Asante administrators when the Asante Confederacy was formed c. 1700. Our initial examination of the first administrators of this confederacy, their family background, factors influencing their recruitment, the levels of their positions in Asante bureaucratic hierarchy, the extent of their authority and power as determined by the Asante Kotoko, was an important basis on which to isolate causes for change as the Asante administration developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

A detailed analysis of the genealogical data and other related material on Asante administrators of various ranks has revealed that kinship ties greatly influenced the recruitment of officials.

Although merit was a consideration for appointment or election to administrative positions it has been shown that it was a decisive factor only in very limited, and often insignificant cases. Furthermore, as the Asanté Confederacy developed and her institutions became complex, new administrative positions (stools) were instituted, but the offices occupied by the descendants--mainly matrilineal--of the original rulers of Asante wielded most power and authority.

Finally, this study has demonstrated that these were the formulators of policies which were followed in both Asante proper and in the tributaries. The same policymakers were the middle and high ranking administrators who directly governed metropolitan Asante, indirectly ruled the tributary states, and negotiated on behalf of Asante with the European powers on the coast. They were responsible for the Asante foreign policy--whether this was conducted in Asante or involved sending ambassadors to England as the Asante did in 1895--on the eve of the British colonial era.

Asante but also for other regions or states where a traditional non-Western society had a strong government. A closer study of the origins of the prominent government officials and the social group (or groups) from which they were recruited will dispel the familiar misconception that administrators were slaves, the king's favorites, eunuchs, etc. This type of local research and re-evaluation is necessary if we are to tread on really solid ground, particularly in studying African traditional governments. I am not, however, suggesting that this study puts me in a position to generalize on this topic for all of the African states. Rather, my purpose is to look at one specific state, to see what administrative system existed before Osei Tutu founded the Asante confederacy, and to examine the modifications that this administration underwent during the next two hundred years.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most illustrious of the West African states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the Asante confederacy. Little was known about Asante--the people or the small states that eventually united to form the confederacy--before 1700. When news of her unexpected victory over Denkyera state, her former overlord, reached Elmina Castle, the Dutch merchants, fearing the disruption of trade, dispatched David van Nyendaal to Kumasi with generous gifts for the Asantehene Osei Tutu, king of the new interior power. By 1800 Osei Tutu and his successors had expanded their kingdom to encompass approximately two thirds of modern Ghana with Kumasi as the center. One exception was the Fante area around Cape Coast. But with the new century Asantehene Osei Bonsu ascended to the Golden Stool (the Asante throne). He was one of the ablest men to hold that office, and in the next quarter century he brought Fante under his rule and established direct contact with the British. Osei initiated the Anglo-Asante relationship, which fluctuated between friendship and hostility, reaching a climax in the last decade of the nineteenth century with the arrest and exile of Prempeh I, the Yaa Asantewa war, and the colonization of Asante.

The Asante saga of success and failure cannot

Using the three approaches listed above we shall try to determine whether the Asante people migrated to their present home from the northwest or from the Adanse region, and whether the Accanes -- the industrious inland traders known throughout the coast since 1500 -- are the proto-Asante. The Accanes (also spelled Accaney, Accanez, Arkanis, Hacany) "disappeared" from the coast in the last years of the seventeenth century and, as our analysis shows, they were to "reappear" again in 1701, shortly after the fall of Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari, as Asante.

Traditions and Migrations

Any investigation of the origins of the Asante must rely on the rich oral traditions found among the Akan people and their neighbors. Eva Meyerowitz, who has collected Akan traditions extensively, states that the Akan dame from the savanna in the north and established Bono State towards the end of the thirteenth century.[1] According to her informants at Tekyiman,

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[1] E. L. R. Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions of Origin, London: Faber, 1952. This is the best known work on this topic by Meyerowitz. See also her: Sacred State of the Akan, London: Faber, 1951; At the Court of An African King, London: Faber, 1962; The Akan of Ghana, Their Ancient Beliefs, London: Faber, 1958. Recently Meyerowitz's Chronology has been questioned by Colin Flight, 'The Chronology of the Kings and Queen mothers of Bono-Mansu: a re-evaluation of the evidence,' in the Journal of African History, XI (1970), 2:259-68. (This Journal will be referred hereafter as J.A.H.). See also the exchange of their communication in J.A.H., XIII (1972), 2:347-50.

evaluating and using oral tradition as an historical document. I also adopted other field method techniques used by anthropologists for gathering data in traditional non-Western societies. I subjected the oral traditions to the same kind of rigorous test that an historian would apply to any source, and the results were as good as one would expect from written documents. Written sources at the Archives in Ghana, Britain and the U.S.A. were particularly useful in cross-checking the oral tradition.

With the field and archival work out of the way, I had enough material to go beyond earlier speculations about the origins of the administrators in Asante. It was possible to examine the origins of the Asante, their routes of migration, their activities and government before the founding of the Asante confederacy; to compare the institutions found on the coast with those in Asante before 1700; to examine the family, marriage, and kinship web to determine the social background of the administrators; to investigate the origins of the stools (or offices), their rank, and their occupants' influence in the government; and to determine the role played by the Akyeame (linguists) and high-ranking Mpanyimfuo (elders) in the administration of Asante affairs.

A study like this is useful not only for

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS OF THE ASANTE*

We may begin our inquiry on the origins of Asante simply by asking: Who are the Asante and where did they come from? The answer to this question is not as simple as it might seem for several reasons. First, as we strive to answer it, we must study any available written sources; second, we must critically examine the traditions and mythologies of origin, and third, we must use any linguistic evidence available to supplement oral traditions and written works. Names of places where the Asante settled in the course of their migrations are significant: they could reveal the names of the settlers and leaders of certain villages, indicate local deities worshiped, point to a major event that occurred in the past, indicate diffusion routes, and clarify relationships between the Asante and their neighbors.

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*Ashanti, the anglicized version of Asante, is still used and found in the works of old and modern writers. I will, however, use Asante in this work because it is the name used by the Asante people themselves, and by two outstanding Ghanaian historians, Carl Christian Reindorf and recently Prof. A. Adu Boahen. But in quotations and titles the version used will be retained.

Using the three approaches listed above we shall try to determine whether the Asante people migrated to their present home from the northwest or from the Adanse region, and whether the Accanes -- the industrious inland traders known throughout the coast since 1500 -- are the proto-Asante. The Accanes (also spelled Accaney, Accanez, Arkanis, Hacany) "disappeared" from the coast in the last years of the seventeenth century and, as our analysis shows, they were to "reappear" again in 1701, shortly after the fall of Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari, as Asante.

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"the ruling class of the people, founders of Bono-Mansu, came originally from a place in the Great White Desert, i.e., the Sahara."[2] But it was the entire Akan people, not the ruling class alone, that came from the north. In her summary she writes: "The Akan people, according to traditions of the major clans which constitute the various states in the Gold Coast, came originally from the region between Djenne and Timbuktu, which is referred to as Dja, Djana, Djala, Djula and Tumutu, and some, like the ruling class of Bono-Mansu and the Koromantse, from places further north in the Sahara."[3]

In her interpretation of oral traditions Meyerowitz overlooked the relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim people in the Sudan savanna area. It is not uncommon for the rulers in this area, especially those who have converted to Islam, to try to identify their ancestors with Islam and even with the people of the Arabian peninsula.[4] Their reasons varied. Trade

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[2]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions of Origin (hereafter cited as Akan Traditions), op. cit., p. 33. This is an obvious reference to Hamitic Theory, which for a long time was broached to explain any complex phenomenon in African history or culture by attributing it to outsiders.

[3]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 124.

[4]Djibril T. Niane in Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali, translated by G. D. Pickett, London: Longmans, 1965, points out the traditions connecting this great founder of Mali Empire with the Prophet Muhammad. Saburi O. Biobaku in Egba and Their Neighbours, New York: Oxford University Press, 1957, has collected traditions in Yoruba indicating the latter's origin to be in the Arabian Peninsula.

benefits followed these feelings of brotherhood; Islam was used to unify the state and legitimize the ruler's position; and the Muslim people were used at the court as teachers, clerks, and "Kramor" (Muslim) administrators.[5] There was also a certain amount of prestige connected with the people who had traveled out of Sudan for economic, religious or political reasons. Those who had traveled to Mecca still carried the prestigious title Al-Hajj before their names. Early in the fourteenth century a royal prince, Obunumankoma, the future third king of Bono, visited the capitals of the northern Sudan and North African rulers as far as Egypt to advertise the gold that his kingdom intended to sell. Later on, when he became king, he established the Sannaa or royal treasury[6] for handling the national currency--gold dust.

Meyerowitz further believes that the "Akan proper"[7] did not migrate into the present Akan habitat "before the end of the fifteenth century." Here we are at a loss, for she does not inform her readers what she means by "Akan proper." Besides, this idea implies

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[5]The use of foreign ideology and myths in the rise of states was not confined to West Africa. In Ethiopia the Kebra Negast legend is the best example. See A. H. M. Jones and E. Monroe, A History of Ethiopia, London: Oxford University Press, 1960.

[6]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 34.

[7]Ibid., p. 25.

that there existed another kind of Akan in this area--maybe proto-Akans--who later intermarried with the newly arrived "Akan proper" to give to West Africa what we now know as Akan. The confusion is increased when we read in one place that it was only the "ruling class"[8] that migrated from the north to Bono and thence south to the forest region to provide the rulers for the area, while in another place we read that "the Akan people" came from north of Bono. The present author learned during his field research among the Akan that any person who referred to himself as an Akan also knew his clan. This, however, does not mean that anyone who calls himself an Akan is truly an Akan. One of the laws that Okomfo Anokye, the supreme lawgiver when Asante union was formed in 1700, decreed was that no one should reveal someone else's origins.[9] The reason for this law was to avert the humiliation that would result if such information was made public, particularly if the individual was well thought of in society, and one of his ancestors had been a slave.

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[8] Ibid., p. 33. J. D. Fage while recognizing the value of Meyerowitz's book nonetheless believed it was "one which is none too easy to read or to follow." 'Ancient Ghana: A Review of Evidence,' in Transactions of Historical Society of Ghana, III, part 2 (1957), p. 94. This Journal will be cited as T. H. S. G.

[9] This information was given to me by Dr. A. A. Y. Krerematen, Director of the Ghana Cultural Center at Kumasi.

It can be argued that this law was intended to conceal the fact that the rulers were foreigners, and their subjects were to real owners of the land who had been enslaved by the Akan. This argument is not supported by the oral traditions collected by Meyerowitz or by me. When the Asante people recount their migrations from Adanse, Asantemanso,[10] etc., they tell of meeting people who were also of Akan origin in the areas they intended to settle. At Kumasi Obiri Yeboa and his followers met the Tafo and Amakom people, who gave them some land to settle on.[11] Jamasi people were

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[10]The Akwamu people who are also Akan have traditions indicating that their ruling clan migrated from Twifo in Denkyera to the north of Accra where they founded their kingdom in the seventeenth century. Wilks, Ivor, 'A Note on Twifo and Akwamu,' in T.H.S.G., III, (1958), part 3, p. 215. For a detailed study of Akwamu see Wilks, Ivor, 'The Rise of the Adwamu Empire, 1650-1710' in ibid., part 2:99-136. It is interesting to note that the ruling dynasty of Akwamu, which probably migrated to Akwamu under Nana Asare with his followers, does not trace its origin to Bono-Manso region. Twifo is to the south of Adanse-Akrokeri-Asantemanso where most of the Asante people trace their origin.

[11]Following the tradition collected from Tafohene Nana Boadu Kwadwo II and his elders; and the Amakomhene Nana Mensa Yiadom II. See also Amakom Stool History, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. IAS/AS 77. Ashanti stool history sources will be henceforth cited as IAS/AS no... These stool histories which were ably collected from the elders or occupants of various stool histories in Asante by John Agyeman-Duah in the 1960's are the best source available for reconstructing Asante history before the major works written by T. Edward Bowdich and Joseph Dupuis early in the 19th century. See respectively: Mission From Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, London: Griffith & Farran, 1873 (the first edition was in 1819) and Journal of a Residence in Ashantee, 2nd edition, London: Frank Cass, 1966 (the first edition was in 1824). Another

given land to settle by Apaa people.[12] Besides, an analysis and comparison of the names of the earlier kings and queen mothers of Bono before it was defeated by Djakpa, reveals that they were common Akan names. Ameyaa and Ameyaw are feminine and masculine names respectively in each of which the last three letters indicate Thursday, the day on which the person was born: Yaa for a woman and Yaw for a man. Takyia Kwame and Dwambera Kwame are both names of people born on Saturday.[13] Kese, Birempong and Katakyira are still used nowadays. Kese, sometimes spelled kesie, means 'great, big, important,' as in Ntam kesie, 'the great oath of Asante.' Birempong means a head chief who occupied one of the constituent kingdoms of Asante or a subdivision within one of these kingdoms.[14] Katakyira (sometimes the -ra is dropped) is a title conferred on the bravest warrior.[15]

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major source of traditional history are the books by R. S. Rattray especially his Ashanti Law and Constitution, London: Oxford University Press, 1929.

[12]According to Jamasihene Nana Borobe II and his elders.

[13]Among the Akan, everybody is called by the day of the week on which he or she was born. There are also appellations which indicate physical features, e.g., Tiatia 'short,' Abodwise 'bearded,' Tenten 'tall' Kokoo 'copper colored'; events happening when someone was born, e.g., Kwaku Ade for a male born on an Adae Wednesday; or their position in the family, e.g., Kwame Nkruma for a male who is the ninth child and born on Saturday.

[14]R. S. Rattray, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

[15]It is noteworthy that Akwasi Amankwaa Afrifa,

The traditions of Asante origins are also interesting because they do not indicate that the Asante were members of the ruling house at Bono. The author was told by several elders in Kumasi that the Asante came from the cave at Asantemanso; others said the cave was located in Adanse. In Mampong the tradition of origin goes back to the female ancestor Ahyiama Guahyia, who according to some informants came from the ground in Adanse or, according to others, came from the sky in a brass pan in the same area. The ancestress of Jamasi people has a similar story.[16]

This conflicting evidence of the origins of the Akan indicates that the argument for a north-southward migration is not conclusive. The evidence collected in the Asante stool histories is almost unanimous in supporting the conclusion that the Asante people

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who led the coup that overthrew the late Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, was given the title of Okatakyi by the Asantehene for his boldness in this risky undertaking.

[16]Information supplied by the queen mother of Mampong and several Mampong elders, who were asked by Nana Mamponghene Atakore Amaniampong II to give me the history of that oman (state). Information on Jamasi is based on history given by Nana Jamasihene and his elders. The information on Kumasi was gathered from all the Birempong of Kumasi oman (state), either in the presence of the king himself, e.g., Tafohene or Adontenhene, or in cases where the kings were not present, by elders who were the stool-appointed historians, e.g., the Bantamahene entrusted two elders and his Akyeamehene to give me the history of his stool; the Akwamuhene sent me to his village about seventeen miles from Kumasi to verify or get answers to puzzling question concerning his stool history. The Kyidomhene also sent me to his village far away from Kumasi to get more history from his aged stool historians.

originated south of Kumasi in the Adanse-Akrokeri region. Information collected by Kwame Arhin in Akrokeri indicated that the Adanse people were the "pre-Ashanti groups."[17] Boahen rejects the Meyerowitz school in favor of what one might call the Tait-Mauny-Goody school: "I found the arguments of the migrationists unconvincing and their conclusions illogical."[18] Boahen, however, believes that the Akan people migrated from the Chad-Benue region into Dahomey and then into the Bono-Tekyiman Gyaman region. From here he believes they finally moved "into the forest region more than three thousand years ago." Their new home was "in the region of the confluence of the Pra and Ofin," where they developed their culture and institutions as we know them today.[19] Most of the Asante traditions do not support the Tekyiman origin, leading us to question their migration into that region first rather than directly into the Pra-Ofin basin. Boahen's suggestion that the Akan migrated from east to west into the Pra-Ofin confluence is more likely, because the Asante traditions indicate a south-northward movement. Since

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[17]Kwame Arhin, "The Structure of Greater Ashanti," in J.A.H., VIII (1967), 1:67-68.

[18]Adu Boahen, "The origins of the Akan," in Ghana Notes and Queries, (hereafter G.N.Q.), The Bulletin of the Historical Society of Ghana, No. 9 (1966), p. 7. This is a brief, excellent analysis of the controversy over the Akan migrations.

[19]Ibid., pp. 9-10.

the Asante are highly meticulous in keeping migratory traditions, it is difficult to imagine their having forgotten any traditions that indicated their origin in the kingdom of Bono. This is even less likely when we recall the period that elapsed between the time Djakpa conquered Bono around 1600 and the time Oti Akenten came to Kumasi in about 1660.

Adanse, Asantemanso and later Kumasi, where the Asante lived, were strategically located on the main trade route from the savanna region to the coast, which benefited the Asante both politically and economically.[20] Some of the traders on this route were Mandingo-Dyula traders.[21] Since traditions collected by Meyerowitz indicate that an Akan state existed at Bono-Mansu, north of the Asante homeland, by the end of the fourteenth century, and written records indicate that there were Akan states on the coast by the end of the

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[20]This trade was already in existence before the founding of the Asante kingdom. Kumasi was located at the site where two trade routes, Elmina-Kumasi-Begho and Elmina-Kumasi-Salaga met. Most of the trade to the north of Kumasi was strongly influenced or controlled by the Mande traders. Goody described the items used in this trade t-us: "Salt from the mines of the Sahara was exchanged for gold, slaves and kola nuts; cattle, cloth and trade goods were also brought from the north." Jack Goody, 'A Note into the Penetration of Islam into the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast,' in T.H.S.G., I (1953), Part 2, p. 45. Kwame Arhin describes this trade in some detail for the nineteenth century in 'Aspects of the Ashanti Northern Trade in the Nineteenth Century,' in Africa, XL (1970), 4:363-373.

[21]P. E. H. Hair, 'Ethnolinguistic Continuity on the Coast of Guinea,' in J.A.H., VIII (1967), 2:260.

fifteenth century,[22] it seems reasonable to conclude that the Asante had either formed a rudimentary state late in the fifteenth century or at least knew how the northern and southern Akan states functioned, particularly through trading communications. This is not a farfetched assumption; migration traditions of stool holders who moved to Asante before Osei Tutu's reign indicate that they (and their ancestors) held stools in Denkyera state, which was founded in the sixteenth century.[23] Furthermore the description of the council of Casamanca,[24] the king of Elmina, which deliberated before leasing castle land to the Portuguese in 1481, indicated that this council corresponded closely to the Akan kings' councils upcountry.[25] The Elmina-Portuguese negotiations were preceded by the usual Akan display of

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[22]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions..., op. cit., pp. 29-34; Claridge, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 44-45.

[23]See Chapters III-V of this work.

[24]Kommendahene Casamanca's name was probably corrupted by the Portuguese from Kwasi Mensa, a common Akan name. This would indicate that the origin of this people was connected with the Asante.

[25]John Barbot, 'A description of the Coast of North and South Guinea,' in Churchill's Collection of Voyages and Travels, Vol. V, pp. 161-162. Before the Kommendahene Casamanse leased fort land to James de Azambuja, the Portuguese had been trading on the Gold Coast for some time, beginning with Juan de Santerem and Pedro d'Escobar in 1471 who were so much surprised with the quality and quantity of gold found there that they called this coast Oro de la Mina 'gold mine.' They also built other small forts at Axim, Shama and Accra to maximize their trade. They were ousted from these castles by the Dutch in the first half of the 17th century (ibid., pp. 162-164).

wealth, martial music, soldiers in full battle gear, pages and attendants to the high-ranking officials, and the typical Akan stools.[26] Besides, according to Pacheco Pereira, the Hacanys (or Accanes as the Asante were called when they lived in Adanse before the founding of the Asante confederacy) were already trading at Elmina as early at 1500.[27]

Accanes: Proto-Asante

The kingdom of Accanes is closely connected with the origins of Asante, as evidenced by both written sources and oral traditions. Earlier writers on Guinea referred to it in their works: French cartographer D'Anville showed it on his maps in 1729 and 1741, in which it was located 41'E and 1°.16'E respectively.[28]

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[26]Compare, for example, Barbot, op. cit., pp. 161-162 with the reception extended by the Asante in Kumasi in the nineteenth century to W. Huydecoper, Bowdich, Dupuis, Winniett and Freeman. (Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 33-35; Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 70-72; Hutton, op. cit., pp. 208-213; Winniett, c. 399 (1849), pp. 3-7; Thomas Freeman, Journal of Various Visits to the Kingdoms of Ashanti, Aku and Dahomi in Western Africa, Third Edition, London: Frank Cass, 1968; H. W. Daendels, Journal and Correspondence, Legon, Ghana: University of Ghana, 1964; W. Huydecoper, The Journal of the Visit to Kumasi of W. Huydecoper, 28 April 1816 to 18 May 1817. Translated by G. Irwin, Legon, Ghana: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana.

[27]Hair, op. cit., p. 259.

[28]T. E. Bowdich, An Essay on the Geography of North-Western Africa, Paris, L-T. Cellot, 1821, pp. 57, fn. no. 1; O. Dapper, Description de L'Afrique, Amsterdam: Wolfgang, Waesberge, Boom & Van Someren, 1686, pp. 284-289 refers to the presence and influence of Accanes on Elmina-Fante coast. Their language was well known from Axim to Accra (p. 300).

Barbot saw many Accanes, too, while he was trading at Elmina late in the seventeenth century. He observed that "Abundance of Accanez Blacks have lodgings in this town, the better to carry on their trade with the Dutch and natives."[29] These Accanes were the main traders in gold from up country. They brought it to the coast and exchanged it for European manufactured goods[30] and local products, especially fish and salt. They also brought slaves and food products such as plantain, yams and snails which were not available in sufficient quantities on the coast.[31] In some parts of Accanes country a handful of salt cost as much as a slave or two.[32]

The Accanes also traded with Ga and Europeans in the Accra region.[33] Here they acted as middlemen between the inland countries and the coast by bringing

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[29]Barbot, op. cit., p. 174.

[30]Dapper notes that the Accanes were skilled negotiators, affable and rich in gold and slaves, op. cit., pp. 289-90.

[31]Salt was one of the most valued items in the forest region where there was neither sea water nor natural salt rock. It was supplied from two sources: from the coast, where it was commonly obtained by drying sea water in shallow holes or sometimes by boiling it; and from the Sahara desert, where the Tuaregs supplied it to the traders who exchanged it for gold or kola nuts from the forest region in the savanna markets: Yendi, Salaga, Daboya, Kintampo, etc.

[32]William Bosman, A New and Accurate Description of Coast of Guinea, London: printed for James Knapton, 1705, p. 308.

[33]Dapper, op. cit., p. 287.

gold, slaves and other items to the large market, located four leagues from Accra,[34] and exchanging them for the same goods as they bought at Almina. From this market the Accanes took their goods to the inland markets, some of which were located as far as three weeks journey distant.[35] It was imperative that they buy their goods at this market because there the Accra king, who controlled this market with efficient inspectors and tax collectors, relied on the revenue from it for his state budget. If he had allowed the Accanes to buy goods directly from the Europeans at the castles, he would have lost the revenue from the inland traders as well as from African agents who got European goods from the castles or ships and sold them to this market after paying the duty tax. Unfortunately, Accra's control of this lucrative trade ended when it became a province of Akwamu kingdom in 1681.[36]

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[34]Barbot, op. cit., p. 184.

[35]The Accanes traded in these inland markets with Dyula merchants who "certainly reached the Gold Coast." Hair, op. cit., p. 260.

[36]The goods which the Accanes bought from the Europeans, and which were common to all the markets in Gold Coast, were: "linen, flyziger, lywat, sheets, sayes, perpetuans, firelocks, powder, brandy, bugles, knives, top sails, nicanees, and muskets." Barbot, op. cit., p. 184. See also Thomas Phillips: 'A Voyage to Guinea and Barbadoes in the Years 1693 and 1694, in Churchill's Collection of Voyages and Travels, Vol. 6. London: Henry Lintot and John Osburn, 1746, p. 222. The Accanes brought the slaves not only from Asante but also from further north, as was indicated by the tribal marks they bore. (Isert, op. cit., p. 174.)

Besides Elmina and Accra, Accanes also traded in other parts of the coast.[37] Their trade dates back to the mid-seventeenth century or even earlier. Barbot gives us some clues to this:

> In former times Anamabo and Cormentin were two of the principle trading places on that coast for the Dutch and English, by the reason of the great resort of Accanez Blacks, who used to come down to each of those places in little caravans; but the unhappy differences between those two European nations, their wars and assaults upon each other, in the years 1664 and 1665, along the coasts of North and South Guinea, did them great damage and obliged the Dutch to return to Mairee, and the English to Cormentin, where during the short time they were possessed of the fort Amsterdam they were so severe to the natives, who liked the Dutch government, as having been used to it, that they and the Accanez Blacks, who lived there as factors, intreated the Dutch general at Mina, to settle a factory at Agga.[38]

But the British did not let the Dutch outmaneuver them in courting African friendships. Shortly thereafter the British recognized the importance of maintaining good relationships with Africans by sending gifts to Fante and Accanes to neutralize Dutch pressure. As the Dutch were on the Gold Coast in 1637 when they took Elmina Castle from the Portuguese,[39] it would be reasonable to assume that the time that the Accanes traded with them goes back to this period. Barbot observes elsewhere

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[37]Dapper, op. cit., p. 287.

[38]Barbot, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

[39]For a detailed account of this takeover see Dapper, op. cit., pp. 281-283.

that the Accanes merchants whom he met at the Coast remembered words and phrases of Portuguese that they had learned from their ancestors who in turn had learned them earlier during their trading interaction with the Portuguese on the coast. Besides these phrases the Accanes knew a pidgin lingua franca--a combination of Italian, French, Latin and Portuguese.[40]

The Accanes homeland was somewhere north of Denkyera and Akim. It was from here that the Accanes, who were well known as "great traders" even before the rise of Denkyera, brought "the gold of Asiante and Akim" to the coastal markets. And the quality of their gold was always "so pure and fine, that to this day the best gold is called by Negroes, Accani Sica, or Accany Gold."[41] Based on reports reaching the coast by traders, Barbot believed that Accany country was divided into two sections: Great Accany and Little Accany. The latter was located to the north of Aquamboe, South of Inta and west of Akim.[42] The former lay to the north of the Little Accany and its merchants conducted lucrative trade with the states on the north as far as river

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[40]Barbot, op. cit., p. 189. For example, these trade names were borrowed from Portuguese and used regularly: Camiza (Camisa - shirt), pipa (pipa - barrel), taba (tobacco - tobacco), ockiva (escrever - write). Others were borrowed from English: broto - bread, copri - copper, hamanke - hammock. Barbot, op. cit., pp. 414-20.

[41]Bosman, op. cit., p. 77.

[42]Dapper, op. cit., p. 290.

Niger.[43] But on the map Barbot shows that the entire Accany territory was bordered on the south by Wassaw, Denkyera, Adom, and Akim from the west and Akwamu on the east.[44]

However, there are several points to consider in assessing the Accanes nation. First, it was difficult to get accurate geographical information from the Accanes and other merchants from the inland. For example, when Bosman asked one of the traders from Akim which was reputed for its gold, how many days it would take to get there, he was told that "very few natives knew how far it extended."[45] Second, it was difficult to separate the information provided by traders in terms of different nations. When Barbot wrote of Accany or Asiante, he confused them. He also thought of Inta and Asiante as one country.[46] Hence the information given on the interior kingdoms had to be carefully sifted. Third, there was a greater chance of exaggeration when events that took place inland were transmitted from one person to the other until they got to the coast. But this does not mean that the interior accounts were completely unreliable. Bosman was obviously able to tell

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[43]Barbot, op. cit., pp. 188-189.

[44]See map on Barbot, ibid., p. 148.

[45]Bosman, op. cit., p. 78.

[46]Barbot, ibid., p. 191.

that the gold brought by Accanes was the best, and this was the gold most desired in Europe, where it commanded the best price. Furthermore, the emergence of Asiante and the total disappearance of Accanes in a territory that was the home of the latter strongly indicates that the two were one.[47]

Oral traditions, too, support the above theory. Late in the fifteenth century the "proto Ashanti" had settled midway between Bono-Mansu and the coast at Fomase in Adanse.[48] This place was to be important in future years as the dispersal point of the Asante people. Fomase means 'at the place where (people) missed the way.' If this is famase, which has changed to Fomase, then it means underground. In this case it would indicate the place where the proto-Asante came from the ground. Or if they were travelling, it could

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[47]Bosman states that the information reaching them on the coast about Asante was that it had even more gold than Denkyera or Adanse, pp. 78-79. Kwame Y. Daaku in assessing the pre-Asante states in the interior comes to the same conclusion as Adu Boahen that the cradle of the Akan was on the Pra-Ofin confluence. It was in this region that he locates the Accanes who traded with the coast: "It appears that the state which the European writers designated as Akani (Accany, Arcany, Hacany) was the source of all the confusion about the inland states. The Europeans were unable to ascertain what this state really was. . . . All the states in the Pra-Offin Birim reaches qualified to be known as Acany, and this area west of Akim was the cradle of the Adansi and Denkyera kingdoms. It is highly probably that there was no such state as Akani but that the European writers just applied a linguistic term to a group of traders who came down to the coast." 'Pre-Ashanti States,' G.N.Q. No. 9 (1966), p. 11.

[48]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 89.

be the place where they missed the road or where they were robbed, or the place where several clans came together, or a place where misfortune befell them. This analysis is based on possible linguistic meanings of fam[49] and on the oral traditions of Asante, which trace their origin from the hole or from some conflict with other people. These Akan people had come from a town called Kankyeabo.[50]

The leaders of Kankyeabo people--Asiriba Gehenewa and Okain--have names which indicate the origin of proto-Asante in this area. Siri means to dam or obstruct the flow of water and ba means daughter. At the graves of Asiriba and Okain there is a cave in which the water is dammed by silt from whence "water trickles." Ancient traditions indicate that there was also a "pool in the rock containing fish and into which gold dust was poured as an offering to Bonda God."[51] It is interesting that

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[49]R. J. Christaller, Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language, 2nd ed. Basel: Basel evangelical Missionary Society, 1933.

[50]This town, rather than being in the savanna as Meyerowitz believes, could still be close to Fomase. Its name comes from two Twi names: kankye 'to pray, invoke or call upon fetish' and either (i) bo 'to push, cast down, (ii) bo 'to beat, flog, surpass or (iii) bo to grow weak, to make weak (see Christaller, op. cit., p. 29, pp. 226-7). There is also an a which is either a prefix before -bo or a conjunction for where, when, or which. Hence the Kankyeabo would mean a place or town where the proto-Asante prayed to god and called upon the fetish when they were weak, beaten or pushed out by their adversaries, human or circumstantial. The Asante cite many reasons in their traditions which forced them to migrate from one location to another.

[51]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 90, footnote

tradition refers to the presence of fish in this pool, because e-sire is a name for a species of seafish caught frequently in the month of August.[52] From this information we can deduce the name of Asiriba as (1) the daughter of the place where the sacred dam was located, (2) the daughter of the sacred place which had a pool with esire fish, (3) the queen of the place that had esire fish or the place where the esire fish came (ba in this sense would mean 'come'). Her second name, Gyahenewa, has various possible meanings: the parts which make it up are gya 'to guide, conduct,'[53] ohene 'king, chief, leader,'[54] and wa, a diminutive suffix. So her name would be literally the little king or guide or the queen who was second in command to the king. Another likely meaning of Gyahenewa is from gyahene (1) a certain kind of cloth or ntama, (2) 'leopard' from agya-hina, which is a small pot in which palm wine is

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1. It should be borne in mind that the author's contention that the proto-Asante lived at Adanse does not preclude the possibility that they might originally have migrated from elsewhere. But after migrating they must have lived in this area long enough to have almost forgotten the traditions of their previous home.

[52]Christaller, op. cit., p. 459.

[53]Christaller, op. cit., p. 152.

[54]The prefix o- is dropped when the stem forms a compound with other words, e.g., Mamponghene 'king of mampong,' Mamponghenemaa 'queen mother of Mampong.' In the latter case ne is dropped, so that we have Mampong-hemaa.

offered to a fetish.[55] She could have been given that name because (1) she wore a gyahene cloth, (2) she was as brave as a leopard, or (3) in the event that there was no fetish priest, she was the one who might have called upon god and ancestors by offering palm wine to a fetish in a small pot. Okain's name is significant. In Twi kan means 'the first' in counting and di kan means 'to be first, to go first.'[56] So Okain, a phonetic corruption is really odi-kan or the first.[57] His second name was Boadee from bo 'create, found or establish' and ade 'something,'[58] which in this context would mean the founder of the kingdom. His full name, Okain Boadee, means the first king who established the kingdom. He was the first king of the original home of the Akan. The name of the Akan is also derived from kan 'first' either as the very first country where the Asante or all the Akan lived[59] or the country which was ruled by the first king of the Akan, whose name was

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[55]Christaller, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

[56]Christaller, op. cit., p. 224.

[57]Many times in Asante when the author asked the elders for the past names of the stool occupants this was regularly used to refer to the first king, e.g., ohene aa odi kan ye fre no _____ 'the king who occupied the stool first is called _____.' . . . The prefix odi in this case means 'the one who occupied.'

[58]Ibid., p. 27.

[59]Ibid., Introduction, p. xiii.

Okain Boadee. This is the country which was known before the rise of Asante nation in 1700 as Accany or Arkany or Akanni.[60]

Linguistic terminology in oral tradition provides another piece of evidence that should be mentioned in connection with the origin of this kingdom. Very close to Fomase there was a rock or cave which was called bo nyame ho. This is literally translated as the rock where the body of god is, or better, as the cave where god resides, or as the place where the creator's rock is. The coincidence of this rock cave with the origin of Asante is noteworthy for two reasons. First, both Mampong and Kumasi Bo Nyame Ho are still remembered in the tradition. Second, even though some informants spoke of another cave near Asantemanso as the place of origin, when the author mentioned Bo Nyame Ho some informants said that that was the name of the place. The discrepancy here between Asantemanso and Bo Nyame Ho is probably due to the long time that has elapsed, the number of people through whom the tradition has passed, and sometimes the tendency towards independent origins of tradition that one encounters in Asante.[61] A branch of these people from Fomase migrated

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[60]Recently scholars have identified Bosman's Acany country as Adanse. William Bosman, A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea, 4th edition, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967. See map opposite p. 1. Hereafter, if this edition is used it will be referred to as 4th edition.

[61]An example of the last is found in traditions

westwards and founded Denkyera; others migrated to the east and southeast to found Akim empire and Akwamu, while still others migrated north and established various Amantuo which later, under Osei Tutu, united to fight Denkyera and establish the Asante union.[62]

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at Jamasi and Mampong which state that their ancestors came from the sky in Adanse sitting in a brass pan. Meyerowitz notes that at the graves of Asiriba and Okain at Bo Nyame Ho there was "a large brass basin containing the sacred water used for the rites" (p. 90, fn. 1). The brass pan figures prominently in Asante traditions. Okomfo Anokye received the Sikadwa--Golden Stool--from heaven in a brass pan. And Denkyerahene sent a large brass pan for Asante to fill with tribute gold which they refused, filling it with rocks to symbolize defiance. This pan was kept at the center of Kumasi until the British took it. This tradition was given by Nana Barema Henry Owusu Ansah (hereafter to be referred to as Nana Owusu Ansah) at Bompata Kumasi. When the author got to Ghana and enquired about the well-qualified oral tradition historians of Asante, he was referred to Nana Owusu Ansah by Dr. Kwame Arhin of the University of Ghana at Legon and Dr. A. A. Y. Kyerematen of Ghana National Cultural Center, Kumasi and Otumfuo Asantehene Opoku Ware II. Ansah is recognized as a national official historian with good reason. As a young son of Anantahene and a Prince of the Golden Stool, his parents saw to it that he was taught the history and traditions of his country and the functions of the highest office for which he was a potential candidate, the King of Asante. He had an added advantage over the other national historians in that as a member of the royal family he could be told secret history that was withheld from the public. Also, whenever necessary, he was able to learn about the history of other stools either directly from stool historians or from the Akyeame or other elders. The author hopes that one day manuscripts of the history of Asante written by Nana O. Ansah, Dr. Kyerematen and the late Asantehene Prempeh II will be published. When the last Asantehene died in 1970, Nana O. Ansah was considered for succession, but due to his age, then seventy-four years, the Asanteman elected a younger man, British-trained barrister Nana Jacob Mathew Poku, to the office.

[62]Christaller, op. cit., pp. 64-65 points out that the ruling dynasties of Akim came from Adanse.

A branch of Akwamu people moved north to Domaa after a palace conflict over succession following the death of Akwamuhene Ansa Saseraku I early in the seventeenth century. The queen mother and her son Obiri Yeboa, whom she had supported for succession but who was defeated by her elder son supported by Tyaasehene, finally settled at Asantemanso a few miles north of Fomase.[63] Asantemanso's location on the main north-south trade route helped its development considerably, since the old Akan capital of Fomase had been destroyed during the Denkyera expansion wars.[64] As Asantemanso grew, it attracted more immigrants, among whom were the members of the Oyoko and Agona clans.[65] In the middle

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The name of Adanse is derived from its strategic trade location on the main road between the coast and the savanna. According to Christaller dan nsa means 'to trade, to negotiate,' whereas dannan ne nsa means 'he trades, deals, is industrious.' So Adanse (besides its regular meaning of a witness) could mean a place where traders resided.

[63]Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 101.

[64]The result of the introduction of the firearms on the coast by the Europeans increased Denkyera's political desire for expansion into Adanse area thereby forcing many Asante people to migrate north to escape from the Denkyera rule. According to Kwame Daaku, "It was around this time that Denkyira rose to fame and subjugated Adansi. The defeat of Adansi led to the movement of many people into the region of Asantemanso which is known as the cradle of the Ashanti nation. From Asantemanso the new immigrants thrust northwards into the Kwaman area where the new capital, Kumasi, was founded." G.N.Q., op. cit., p. 12.

[65]Carl C. Reindorf, The History of the Gold Coast and Asante, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966, Reprint of the 2nd ed., Chapter IV.

of the century a power struggle took place between the newcomers and the Domaa. The later were defeated and forced to move further north, where they founded another capital, Suntiriaso, close to Kumasi and several other towns to the northwest. After three decades of peace, another war between the Domaa and Oyoko, people who had by now moved to Kumasi, broke out, and the former killed Obiri Yeboa--the Kumasihene. It was during this time that the elders of Kumasi decided to send for Osei Tutu from Denkyera, where he was umbrella carrier[66] for Denkyerahene, to come to Kumasi to succeed his uncle.[67]

The emergence of Osei Tutu, his wars with Domaa and Denkyera, and the disappearance of the kingdom once known as Accaney marked an important turning point in the history of Guinea forest. An attempt was made to point out already that the Accanes people were in effect the proto-Akans from whom the Asante people were derived. We have also alluded to some of the factors that

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[66]According to Nana Owusu Ansah in Akan members of the stool families who are potential heirs to stools are apprenticed at the king's court by performing a service to the king. While performing such functions they also learn by listening and observing the court procedure. Umbrella carriers carried (or supervised the carrying of) the king's umbrella for protection against the sun when the king was traveling or sitting in state at the open ground during ceremonies and festivals.

[67]Ibid., Bantama Stool History IAS/AS 39 and 40; Akwamu Stool History IAS/AS 38; Akyempim Stool History IAS/AS 106; Hia Stool History IAS/AS 154; Antoa Stool History IAS/AS 34.

aided them to develop: the trade with both the northern savanna and the forest region and the southern coastal region; their strategic geographical location between the two zones; and the emergence of European crops and weapons in the coast.

The Accanes State and the Emergence of Asante

In order to complete this background to the Asante history we must examine a few more aspects of the Accanes kingdom: the extent of its power, its political influence, and its replacement by or transformation into Asante and various other Akan nations, Akim and Akwamu. Eraly in the sixteenth century the Portuguese, recognizing the significance of trade with this inland kingdom, sent gifts and messengers to its monarch.[68] The power of Accaney lay in its control of

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[68] Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 97, The Portuguese influence in this coast was very limited and depended in exchange of gifts with coastal rulers. Martin Frobisher's Report about Guinea "based upon his experience while a prisoner at Mina in 1555" bears this out: "He saith that nonn of the people, other than suche as enhabite under the said forte and castell walls or within gonshott of the same, doo owe any obedience, neither be they at the Portingalis commaundement. That the Pontingall, that be withyn the said castells, or other that are inhabiting abowt the same, dare not goo one myle from the forte or castell to by any manner of victuralls, nor dare ones attempt to trouble any that are disposed to bring any merchandis to the coastes near unto the said castells, except the said Portingalls doo by rewardes first obtayne fabour of the rullers next adjoyning to doo the same." John W. Blake, Europeans in West Africa, 1450-1560, London: Hakluyt Society, 1942, Vol. 2, pp. 358-59.

rich gold sources.[69] And the power of Asante, once this nation became known in the coast, was also based on control of the same metal. Barbot, writing in 1682, observes that "nothing can be said of this country, which is utterly unknown, for want of correspondence, but that it is very rich in gold, some parcels whereof are brought to the Gold Coast. . . ."[70] The Accanes's trade revenue was also valued by the states lying between them and the coast. Once when their trade was interrupted by Fante groups and the interruption affected the purse of the Sabo monarch, he decided to protect them by raising an army and asking the Accanese "principle merchants" for support. The latter responded by choosing Nimfa, "the most eminent of their traders, and for fortune, experience, and courage the best qualified, for their general."[71] They also received help from the British, who believed that the trade interruption was instigated by the Dutch. The Accanes and their allies won the war and even influenced the selection of the new king of the defeated Fetu people, who signed a

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[69]Olifart Dapper writing in 1670 noted that the Akanier "have become very famous because of their trade which they conduct with the Dutch and other Whites and the Blacks of the interior, ... They are rich in slaves and gold and are great traders as well. . . . They bring two-thirds of the gold which the Whites buy on the coast each year." Translation in G.N.Q., op. cit., p. 16.

[70]Barbot, op. cit., p. 189.

[71]Thomas Phillips, op. cit., p. 240.

treaty of "inviolable friendship with the Arkanis; and suffer them to pass through his country with their gold and goods without molestation."[72] Another important coastal product which the Accanes brought inland was iron in bars, for making tools and weapons for local use.[73]

The political power wielded by the Accanes beyond their participation in the Sabo/Fetu war is hard to assess. At one time we learn that they were in competition with Akwamu--apparently over trade with the Accra region--resulting in a war. According to reports reaching the coast, "the Accanese made inroads into Aquamboe destroying all with fire and sword."[74] But what happened to this powerful people before the emergence of Asante power is a mystery. Our only record of their disappearance comes from Bosman:

> For three years past we have not much reason to complain about them, they not having traded for much. For they, on what account I am ignorant, falling out with Denkirans, were so beaten that all their governing men, and no small number of the Inferior

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[72]Thomas Phillips, 'An Abstract of a Voyage to Guinea . . . in 1693 in Thomas Astley, New General Collection of Voyages and Travels, London: Pater-Noster-Row, 1745, p. 411.

[73]Barbot, op. cit., p. 188.

[74]Barbot, op. cit., p. 188. It is also possible that these wars are the ones retained in oral traditions between Asante and Akwamu in the seventeenth century at about the time that the latter were emigrating from Akan dispersal area and the former were establishing themselves at Asantemanso and Kumasi.

> People were killed and taken prisoner; to redeem which out of slavery they were obliged to strip themselves of all they were possessed of in the world; by which means they were reduced to the utmost poverty and inability to defend themselves. But the Dinkirans themselves being now ruined, as well as they, and having declared for the king of Asiante, perhaps these may recover some of their Ancient Lustre.[75]

The Accanes were not so much devastated by the Denkyera as Bosman's account would imply. For the three years that they were not seen in the coast they were preparing for war. According to Kumasi tradition, the preparation for the Denkyera war took three years.[76] This was because the Asante had lost their king, Obiri Yeboa. Osei Tutu needed some time to reorganize the army after the Domaa war and to unify the other Amantuo into a power that could successfully challenge Denkyera. Barbot, writing in 1682, reveals that Asante as a power was known in the coast, and its military capability was sufficiently strong to be respected by Denkyera. At that time Denkyera state had risen ". . . so high, that its people are feared and honoured by all nations round about except those of Assiante and Akim who are still more potent than they."[77]

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[75]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

[76]Nana Owusu Ansah.

[77]Barbot, op. cit., p. 189. Barbot's Voyage to Guinea is in two parts. The first part, from which this quotation is taken, contained the information he gathered when he was visiting Guinea in 1682. The second part, which is a supplement to his description, is based on other written sources: correspondence from

Barbot's assessment of the Asante power in relation to that of her neighbors is significant. It provides us with independent information on which we can hypothesize the tributary relationship between the Asante states and their overlord, the Denkyerahene. It also provides us with an additional basis on which to conclude that Asante were the successors of Accany. It will help us to speculate on the development of internal and external politics after the defeat of Denkyera. Furthermore, it is even more important in analyzing the causes of the most decisive war between these two nations. According to Bosman, the war was the result of Denkyera's arrogance of power and of Denkyerahene Bosiante's failure to observe accepted etiquette to the wives of the king of Asante. The reports reaching the coast indicated that

> Dinkira, elevated by its great Riches and Power, became so arrogant, that it looked on all other Negroes with a contemptible Eye, esteeming them no more than Slaves; which rendered it the object of their common Hatred, each impatiently wishing for its downfall; tho' no Nation was so hardy as to attack, injured and affronted by its Governour, adventured to revenge himself on this Nation in a signal manner.[78]

It was customary in those days for monarchs to exchange

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other people and two journeys made by his brother James in 1699 to New Kalabar and by his nephew James Barbot to Congo in 1700. The supplement is not as reliable as the first part. For example, in describing the Ashanti Denkyera war of 1700, he copies Bosman verbatim.

[78]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

gifts both ways: from the overlord state to the tributary and vice-versa. It happened that at that time the Denkyerahene had sent his wives to Kumasi to present his gifts to Kumasihene Osei.[79] The Kumasihene, after the usual courtesies, sent off Denkyerahene's wives with gifts. Later it was his turn to send his wives to Denkyera to take gifts to the king. But the Denkyerahene Bosiante violated Kumasihene's most beautiful wife. When they returned to Kumasi and informed Kumasihene of what happened, he was angry and determined to revenge the insult.

Another reason given for the war was that the Denkyerahene sent word to Kumasi demanding that all the royal wives at Kumasi be sent to Denkyera. He also reportedly demanded an increase in taxes. The Asante people, however, refused both these demands and their refusal precipitated the war. According to still another tradition the cause of the war was that the

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[79] Assumed to be Osei Tutu. The title of Osei, according to tradition, predates Osei Tutu's time. Incidentally, Tutu means 'walk' or 'move' in Twi. When the author was at Kumasi he was told the following story about how Osei Tutu got his name. As an infant, Osei had not begun to walk at the normal age. His name then was Osei Kwame. People were surprised and concerned by this ill fate which had befallen the royal child, and several medicine people were consulted. Finally, one day when his attendant was trying to make him walk, all the time saying "Osei, tutu" (Osei, walk!), the boy started walking. The word spread around the town that now Osei walks, that is Sesei Osei tutu oo!! The informant was Barema Osei Kofi, the brother of the present Asantehene.

Denkyerahene sent a huge brass basin to Kumasi and demanded that the Asante fill it with gold.[80] Further, he asked that the Asante people send sanitary napkins for the Denkyerahene's wives, which were obtainable from the Asante. The Asante refused both demands and this was construed by Denkyerahene as a sign of rebellion. At this point he vowed to punish them and they vowed to resist. It was then that the three-year preparation was begun.[81]

Although there exists evidence in tradition and in writing that the cause of the Kumasi-Denkyera war was centered partly on women, the general emphasis has been placed elsewhere.[82] The reason most often quoted was that the Asante wanted to expand to the coast. This, however, was not the original motive but rather

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[80]Meyerowitz, p. 95, says this demand was not refused; Nana Owusu Ansah stated that it was. Traditions collected by Rattray support Nana Owusu Ansah. Ashanti Law, chapters IX, X, and XIX.

[81]Nana Owusu Ansah. The sanitary napkins that the Denkyerahene wanted were made from the dried leaves of the banana trunk. Once the leaves were peeled off, they were beaten on a log with a mallet and became so soft that they were good absorbents. The demand for these napkins, though it may seem unusual to the Westerner, demonstrated that there were several items which the subjugated states could pay to their overlord as tribute or tax. This was not the first time that the Denkyerahene had made this demand.

[82]The Asante never went to war specifically due to shortage of women although after campaigns women and children were eventually assimilated into Asante society: women as wives of soldiers and rulers and male children as future soldiers or as other kinds of manpower.

the cause of later wars after the defeat of Denkyera. Bosiante's behavior towards the Kumasihene's beautiful wife was obviously a very serious insult not only to the king but also to his subjects, whose pride was humiliated. Another possible cause for the war at that time was the Asante evaluation of the unstable political situation following Bosiante's death. It is not unusual in Akan politics of succession to find two powerful candidates whose supporters may ultimately force an armed confrontation.[83] Once the injury had occurred, a strong following in Denkyera felt that a war with the Asante would not be advisable,[84] where as the other side,

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[83]In Asante alone this conflict has come up several times, cf. M. Priestley and I. Wilks, 'Asante Kings in the Eighteenth Century: a revised chronology,' in J.A.H., I:1, 1960. A turbulent interregnum followed Osei Tutu's death over the election of his successor and if their interpretation is accepted his successor ruled the country five years and left in disgrace, pp. 84-85. It is customary in Asante stool histories to omit the names of the kings whose term of office was disgracefully terminated. Opoku Ware's reign was also followed by a dispute over the successor. Priestley and Wilks point out that the contender, Dako, was put to death. And Kusi Buadum was destooled fourteen years later. Osei Kwame was also destooled, pp. 93-95. And in the nineteenth century two occupants of the Golden Stool were destooled and succession was not only seriously contested but brought the most serious civil war in Asante history in the 1880's between the supporters of Prince Atwereboana and Prempeh I.

[84]One irony about the Akan tributary governments was the desire that a royal member of the dependent state and his retinue should remain at the overlord's capital as a security against revolt. When the retinue members moved from the overlord's capital to the dependent state capital, they not only reported on the health of the Prince or Princess, but also brought with them valuable intelligence concerning all facets of the state. This arrangement benefited the Asante in 1700, but

which had an upper hand not only in war policy decision but also in the election of the new ruler, Ntim Gyakari, won the day. The dissidents did not render their full support to the campaign, a fact which was known by the Asante through their spies at the Denkyerahene's court. Indeed, several times later when the Asantehene required some of his vassals to send troops to help crush a rebellion, some of them refused, calculating that he was too busy to send any punitive expedition against them. A case in point would be the Akyim states who had attempted to help Denkyera and were defeated by Osei Tutu;[85] peace was agreed on after they promised to pay a heavy fine. But during Opoku Ware's time, knowing that the latter was busy suppressing revolts in the northwest, they refused to pay the fine. They miscalculated, however, for once he had finished his campaign elsewhere he did turn to the rebellious Akyim states and once again brought them under control.

During the war the reports reaching the coast indicate that the Asante were well prepared for the battle. They had been buying and stocking up weapons from the coast despite the power of the Denkyera, who at this time were apparently divided and so anxious to avoid the war that they did not dare interfere with the

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thereafter it was the Asante vassals who benefited most. It may also explain the revolts and rebellions in many of Asante's provinces after the death of each Asantehene.

[85]Bosman, op. cit., p. 76.

Asante crews going to the coast. Bosman wrote:

> The enraged Prince . . . prepared himself for a vigorous war, by raising a strong Army, in order to make a Descent on Dinkira: And not being sufficiently stocked up in powder, he brought up great quantities on the Coast. The Dinkirans being foolish enough to assist him themselves, suffered his subjects to pass with it uninterrupted through their country, notwithstanding they knew very well it was only designed for their Destruction.[86]

When the time for the showdown finally came, the Asante army was at first defeated. The Asante retreated and regrouped for a second battle at Feyiase, in which they completely defeated the Denkyera army, reducing the entire enemy country to a tributary state.[87] The Denkyera lost their entire national wealth to the victors, as was reported by one European witness:

> The Plunder after this Victory took up the Asiantines fifteen days time, (as is said but perhaps largely enough); that Zay's Booty alone amounting to several thousand Marks of Gold, as is affirmed by one of our European Officers, who was sent on some Embassy to Zay, and says, he had several times seen the treasure. This Messenger of ours, who is now in Asientean Camp, hath Orders to take exact Account of what he hears and sees there.[88]

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[86]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 75-86.

[87]Nana Owusu Ansah; Rattray, Ashanti Law, chapters X; IAS/AS 38 and 39. Another reason that might have influenced the fall of Denkyera was the rapid expansion policy that it pursued from 1688 to 1700 to protect its northern trade with Begho. The Assin were defeated in 1698 and the Twifo in 1700--just before Denkyera turned against the Asante. Kumah, J. K., 'The Rise and Fall of the Kingdom of Denkyira,' in G.N.Q., No. 9 (1966), pp. 33-35. I. Wilks has studied the Begho trade in greater detail in his Northern Factor in Ashanti History, Legon, Ghana: University College of Ghana, 1961.

[88]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

Thus ended the power of one of the Akan kingdoms at the hands of another Akan kingdom that was on the rise, both kingdoms having originated from the same dispersal area in Adanse.

The Adanse people whom the Kumasihene and his allies had asked for help against the Denkyera had refused, and the king had moved east to the Akim/Akwamu area.[89] Following the war, however, they agreed to become a tributary of the new Asante power, since the alternative would have been expensive both materially and in human terms. Adanse was one of the kingdoms that Bosman had noticed at the time the news of the Asante rise reached the coast.

Politics had indeed changed in the Adanse region by 1700. All the clans of Asante whose members were represented in the new nation had a tradition tracing their origin to Adanse--Oyoko, Akuona, Agona, Asine, Beretuo, Asona, Aduana.[90] From Adanse to Kumasi,

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[89]Adanse Paramount Stool History IAS/AS 89.

[90]These traditions are significant in that their relationship was not characterized by wars. Thus the Beretuo, for example, would say that they left mainly because they had insufficient land. In their migrations to Mampong they would relate how they were met by other clans on the way, and were offered a place to settle for a while until they were ready to move on in their search for a better place. Information on this subject was provided by Nana Mamponghemaa and her aunt. When this author was gathering Mampong history, the former decided to send for the latter at Kumasi where she lived. She was quite surprised that he needed to know so much of the history of her oman that she, the best living authority on Mampong stool, had to be called. At first she was suspicious, but when she was assured that the

leading his people against the Domaa.[92] Obiri Yeboa was a man of inexhaustible energy and a good negotiator. Seeing no bright future at Asantemanso, he decided to move north to Okumanyinase, the site of present-day Kumasi.[93] Here he managed not only to negotiate for a place to settle with the Amakom people, but also to join the political power by exchanging gifts with them.[94] In Kokofu Nana Gyaame, Osei Tutu's uncle, established Kokofu town while a stool dispute in Juaben forced the losing group, let by Nana Tutu Akoto, to found Bekwai.[95] The other group of the Oyoko who left Asantemanso were the Nsuta people.

Asantemanso town, where all the states that came

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[92]Juaben Stool History IAS/AS 16.

[93]Kokofu Stool History IAS/AS 44. Okumanyinase town was so named because there were many cotton trees there. The town was literally called "the town under the cotton trees." Later the name was changed to Kumase after the formation of the Asante union. According to a fairly widely known tradition in Asante, Okomfo Anokye, in order to determine the capital of the new union, narrowed the choice down to two towns, in each of which he planted a "kum" tree. The idea was that of the two trees one would die and the other would live. The capital would be at the town where the tree continued to grow. The tree planted at the capital of Kumawu state died, while the tree at Okumanyinase lived. Hence the capital was established at the latter place and was called kum-ase, meaning literally 'under the kum tree.' The town where the kum tree died is known as kum-a-wu 'the place where the kum tree died' even up to the present time.

[94]Amakom Stool History IAS/AS 77. Reindorf, states part of the land that Obiri Yeboa and his followers occupied at Kumasi was given by Tafohene Kwaku Dompo, op. cit., p. 50.

[95]IAS/AS 44; IAS/AS 16.

to form the Asante union lived before migration, is shrouded in mystery. Often a researcher gets traditions indicating that the Asante ancestors came from the cave located here.[96] Sometimes traditions state that the cave was located in Adanse. Adanse is the place whose name has come to be identified with the people who once lived there. Several hypotheses have been advanced to explain the meaning of this name, but since none of them is totally conclusive, the author will suggest his own. Asantemanso could be a combination of three names: kasante 'disobedience'[97] and man-so 'nation of the people.' In this sense it would be the place where the people who had rebelled or disobeyed another ruler fled and settled. As the town grew in size it retained its original name. Christaller also shows that the synonym of kasante is seante.[98] Probably it was from this word that this nation was known on the coast as Asiante during Bosman's time. He further writes that kasante was "formerly given to a nation in the interior,

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[96]R. S. Rattray, Ashanti, London: Oxford University Press, 1923. Chapter X. He writes of the connection between the origin of the Asante and this sacred cave: "At this spot, Ashanti myths declares, the first human beings, belonging to certain of their ruling clans, came forth from the ground, and settling near by, increased and multiplied, learned the use of fire and other arts, till eventually, compelled by increasing numbers, they scattered and became the clan or 'blood' from which the rulers of the united nation later chose their kings and queens," p. 121.

[97]Christaller, op. cit., p. 428.

[98]Christaller, op. cit., p. 229.

frequently at war with Asante." This "rebellion theory" is particularly interesting because the first settlers of Asantemanso, such as the Ekuona and Oyoko, were from other areas to the south. It is also noteworthy that the Asante referred to rebels against them as "Asante." The leader of these rebellious first groups may have proudly decided to call his town Asantemanso, i.e., the town of the people who rebelled. Rebellion can be something to be proud of and to retain in traditional history, especially when one rebels against oppressors. In another section Christaller gives these words for a disobedient person: seante, seantie, seanteni (nea wose no asem bi a onte) or a person who, whether intentionally or not, doesn't understand what you tell him.[99]

Another probable meaning of Asante would be ascertained by studying the botany of the area where Asantemanso was located to see whether asante-anhu-ntem 'a species of yam' grew there.[100]

We will probably never find out for sure the meaning of Asante. But at least we can conclude from the descriptions of the Europeans living on the coast the Asante are the same as, or part of, the larger group that was generally known on the coast as Accanes in the

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[99] Ibid., p. 430. Prof. R. K. Kent informs me that in Brazil rebel slaves were sometimes called "sentis."

[100] Ibid., p. 428.

sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The simularity of institutions between the Asante and the coastal Akans was not an accident, but due to a common origin, most likely in Adanse. Christaller believes that the slight linguistic difference between these coastal groups, especially Fante ts and dz, "had not yet taken place in 1764 when Ch. Protten published a short Fante Grammar of Copenhagen."[101] By studying and comparing institutional similarities of the coastal Akan and using that knowledge to supplement the Asante oral traditions and written sources, we will be able to understand how Asante administration developed and functioned in that country. This is the task we will turn to in the following chapters.

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[101] Ibid., Introduction to the Dictionary, p. xiv.

CHAPTER II

AKAN INSTITUTIONS ON THE COAST

What impresses the contemporary field researcher in Asante and the Akan areas are their many striking similarities. An acquaintance with European travelogues dealing with the coast written before 1800 will reveal--although change has taken place over years--a remarkable similarity between what the Europeans observed in these regions,[1] and what one observes today Numerous examples can be cited: funeral ceremonies, religious worship and rites, the mode of social organization, the structure of traditional government, especially the role of the elders, marriage and the

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[1]See for example Voyages and Travels or Descriptions of Guinea written by John Atkins, John Smith, William Snelgrave, M. Villault, Rev. Godfrey Loyer, John Barbot, Thomas Phillips, Olifart Dapper, Paul Isert, and William Bosman. Some of the works of these authors are either published separately or abstracted in general works of collections of Travels and Voyages such as those edited by A. Churchill, Thomas Astley, or Hakluyt Society. Of course one would have to allow for European biases and erroneous observations: the absurd talk about cannibalism that one encounters, so strongly in Snelgrave, among others, and which his contemporary John Atkins disagreed with; the myth that the Africans cheated in all their relationships with Europeans, especially in the gold trade; the imposition of a Christian morality, etc.

credit system.[2]

This chapter will consider these early travelogues as necessary background in contrasting the coast with the Asante. The following assumptions seem to emerge: that the similarities between the coastal areas and Asante sufficiently indicate the common origin of these people; that the differences are attributable to time and spatial distance from the dispersal point; that when the Asante kingdom was formed in 1699 the Asante were familiar with, and indeed had, though at a rudimentary level, institutions similar to those found on the coast; that such a comparison is necessary if, in the absence of written records on Asante before Bowdich's mission to Kumasi in 1817, any valid conclusions are to be drawn concerning what was happening in Asante; that the developments that took place in Asante did not differ in kind from those on the coast, but only in

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[2]Again it should be stressed here that the author is not unaware of the vast changes that have taken place in Ghana since that first meeting in 1481 when Caramanca assembled his elders at Elmina to discuss de Azambuja's request for a piece of land to build the castle. (Diogo de Azambuja wrote that Casamanca ". . . was of good understanding, both by nature and by his intercourse with the crews of the trading ships, and possessed a clear judgement." The Voyages of Cadamosto, translated and edited by C. R. Crone, London: Hakluyt Society, 1937, p. 120.) However, it is obvious that if one walked around Kumasi on Saturday he would see one or more funeral crowds dressed in red, black or orange ntama under huge umbrella tents. If one proceeded down the road to Cape Coast and stopped at another town like Foso on the same day, he would see similar crowds.

degree; that the administrative development is not to be credited to the original ideas of one leader, but rather to the time and the prevailing circumstances within and outside the kingdom; that the Asante state never enjoyed long enough periods of peace for the country to be fully under the civil administration; and that the analysis of the administrative bureaucracy is interrelated with the military structure of the country. Asante administration cannot be analyzed in strictly Weberian terms because the political and administrative posts were never that clearly separated.

The king of Asante was not an absolute monarch, as some writers unconvincingly tried to portray him. Rather, he was what Weber characterized as a constitutional monarch (though with some qualifications):

> When a constitutional king agrees with the socially important part of the governed, he very frequently exerts a greater influence upon the course of administration than does the absolute monarch. The constitutional king can control these experts better because of what is, at least relatively, the public character of criticism, whereas the absolute monarch is dependent for information solely upon the bureaucracy.[3]

This definition requires several modifications, however. First, there were two groups of people from which the king could appoint bureaucrats: the free and the slaves. Second, among the free people, the office, once appointed, became the property of the family of the

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[3]H. H. Gerth, and C. Wright Mills, eds., From Max Weber, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1940, p. 234.

appointee. Third, bureaucratic positions and functions were not clearly distinct from family functions.[4] Thus, whereas in modern times official duties are separated from private functions by specific abstract rules and regulations, the traditional officers of the king in Asante also represented their family interests. In this case they performed functions that are handled in Western society by bureaucrats and politicians: at one time they could be lobbying for their clans and at another time they could be sitting in policy decision meetings.[5] Fourth, the Asantehene acted both as monarch and as monarch and as chief administrator, coordinating the activities of the high administrators in the nation. However, the king and higher bureaucrats (elders) also acted as the source for collective power and authority in the nation, each depending on the other on a consultative level. In this capacity the Asantehene synthesized the elders' advice as a unit before reaching

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[4]In his analysis of Asante traditional political institutions Apter observed the significance role played by the family: "Among the most organized tribes in the Gold Coast, the Ashanti, it is impossible to gain an adequate picture of tribal social and political organization without examination of the family structure. . . . Its paramountcy in the formation of tribal political prescriptions is genuine. It was the basis of the continuing lineage, and as such a crucial social unit. Most important of all, perhaps, tribal roles were family roles writ large." David Apter, The Gold Coast in Transition, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1955, pp. 88-89.

[5]Rattray, Ashanti Law, Chapters VIII-XIII.

any major decision.[6] This is not at odds with the Weberian approach, for

> As long as an expert knowledge of administrative affairs was the exclusive product of long empirical practice, and administrative norms were not regulations but elements of tradition, the council of elders--in a manner typical often with priests, 'elder statesmen,' and notables participating--was the adequate form for collegiate authorities, which in the beginning merely gave advice to the ruler.[7]

We shall analyze this idea more closely later.

The Family and Kinship Institutions

Of the coastal institutions to be examined, it would be most appropriate to begin with the family. It is in the family setting that we see the relationship of the individuals within small units--nuclear family, extended family, lineage or clan--and with other institutions: For example, the lineage head as a tax

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[6]This was in accordance with established political norms because as Apter noted, "The limits to the role of chief, for example, which was a specialized composite of sacred and non-sacred functions were carefully delineated and watched by the elders and asafo companies. The chief had an elaborate system for sounding out public attitudes about his own activities, and if he was treading on dangerous ground, for finding out the extent of opposition. The chief kept his ear to the ground through the elders and other public officials so that he could be aware of public sentiment. If he went beyond the bounds of his office, he could be, and frequently was removed or destooled," p. 84. When Apter was writing the frequency of destoolments was much higher due to colonial intervention than during the precolonial period. This is borne out by a close look at the number of stool occupants in Asante since 1900.

[7]Gerth and Mills, op. cit., p. 237.

collector, military leader and participant in religious ritual. Along the coast Bosman observed that polygamy was very common,[8] and the brides were either local girls or women war captives from far inland. (One of the major consequences of war was that large numbers of captives were taken from the conquered enemy. Once the war was over, the captives were divided according to rank, and the extent of one's contribution toward victory.) While in patrilineal societies the girl's parents asked a large dowry, among the coastal Akan the bridegroom did not need much money to get married.[9] It was "sufficient if he has enough to defray the expense of the Wedding Day; which consists of a little gold, Wine, Brandy, a sheep for the Relations, and new cloths for the Bride. . . ."[10] In Bosman's time the bridegroom and his family kept an accurate account of all gifts exchanged during the marriage, so that in the event of divorce they could be repaid by the bride's family before divorce became final.[11]

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[8]Bosman, op. cit., letter XII, ppl. 196-216. In this paragraph I am leaning heavily on this letter for the earlier period.

[9]Even to-day, bridegrooms in Asante need only a token payment for dowry such as bottle of Schnapps [Dutch gin] or whisky for pouring the libation to solemmize marriage.

[10]Bosman, op. cit., p. 198.

[11]Bosman, ibid., Nowadays in Asante according to my observation in the marriage arrangement that I witnessed in Kumasi and further information from Mr. F. B. B. Apiagyei, Department of Social Sciences, University

There were other circumstances besides war which influenced polygamous marriages. It was socially accepted that the higher a man's status, the greater the number of wives he could marry, because he could support them, and because he was desirable as a potential in-law for the girl's parents. The free girls also wanted to be married to such men because it was obviously advantageous: "The Principle Merchants or Traders Wives are the happiest, because not obliged to much labour out of the House, and they are well provided for by their Husbands."[12] Furthermore, men of higher political status such as kings, war captains and administrators had social prestige which girls considered as important as the security offered by the traders' wealth.[13] Since many domestic duties had to be performed, it was always a welcome relief for the first wife to see her husband marry an extra wife as an added help to these duties. Sometimes she even urged him to do so. The more wives

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of Science and Technology at Kumasi.

[12] Ibid., p. 200.

[13] In State processions all along the coast, wives of the higher elite were better dressed and jewelled than their counterparts married to husbands of low rank. In Kumasi, when the author was waiting for the trotro bus once, he saw a fairly well-dressed woman hitchhiking, and upon enquiring from a person standing next to him why the lady didn't take the bus, he was told that "Ne kunu ye nipa kesie wo University ho, nti ontumi fa trotro," that is, her husband is a big man at the University so she can't take a trotro.

a man had, the more self-sufficient was his household.[14] When one wife was in the market, another was in the garden getting food, while the third was babysitting all of their children at home. Meanwhile, the husband was at the farm, fishing, herding livestock, or if he was old, at the king's court acting as one of the adjudicators and policy makers in affairs concerning his family, clan, village, town or the entire country.

He could also be participating in arbitration cases dealing with marriage, handled by "Courts of Judicature." The composition of the latter was the same in those days as it is today: an "assembly" or "court," made up of "Old Gentlemen."[15] Adultery, inheritance, and succession formed the bulk of the cases. The method by which these cases were settled indicated the hierarchical pattern of the courts. Since the society was matrilineal all inheritance moved along the mother's side. Bosman was able to observe that:

> Brothers and sisters children are the rightful and lawful Heirs, in the manner following. They do not jointly inherit, but the eldest Son of his Mother is Heir to his Mother's Brother or her son

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[14]Even nowadays it is not uncommon for Asante women traders to travel to distant markets like Accra or Bolgatanga and to leave her co-wife with children for the duration of her absence--sometimes as long as ten days for those without a co-wife a sister, mother took over the role.

[15]Bosman, op. cit., p. 201.

[16]Ibid., p. 203.

> as the eldest daughter is Heiress of her Mother's Sister or her Daughter; Neither the Father himself or his Relations, as Brothers, Sisters, &c. have the Goods of the Defunct.[16]

Due to this inheritance rule, couples took steps fairly early in their marriage to ensure that property was kept separate so as to avoid potential disputes following their death. This inheritance rule was not restricted to material property but applied also to political offices created by the king for a particular family.[17] These offices were the abosua or family stools. They differed from service stools, whose successors could be appointed by the king from the same family or from a different one.[18] When disputes on these matters could not be settled between the families, an appeal was made to the council of elders, or to the youth council if the litigants were young.[19]

Marriages were also entered into as a means of unifying two families or towns. (In this respect they resemble marriages undertaken for political reasons among European nations before the Industrial

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[17]See K. A. Busia, Position of Chief in Modern Political System of Ashanti, London: Oxford, 1951, Chs. I-II.

[18]More on stools later in Chs. IV-VI.

[19]In the coast the council or groups formed by young men, and which dealt primarily with their discipline and social control, were called Mancheros. Later these evolved into the Asafo system. In Asante the Nkwaankwa was the counterpart of Asafo. For a good account of the origins and development of Asafo system see Ansu K. Datta and R. Porter, "The Asafo System in historical perspective," in J.A.H., XI:2, pp. 279-297. For Nkwaankwa see Busia, op. cit., Ch. 1.

Revolution.) These marriages were arranged by the parents of the bride and bridegroom. Thus Bosman wrote:

> The Children of the Chief or Rich People, whose Relation are inclined to it, and want Money, are frequently married before they become acquainted with the distinction of Sexes. Further several Families willing to be more nearly allyed, interchangeably marry their Children as soon as they are born, without any other Ceremony than the agreement of Parents on both Sides.[20]

The following tradition in Kumasi explains now the Asantehene Kwaku Dua I came to be named Fredua Agyeman: He was the most peaceful king in Asante history; he never waged as many wars as did his predecessor; he was concerned with unifying the nation through compromise and persuasion. As one of the techniques for achieving his goals he is reputed to have arranged to marry his daughters to prominent men in sister kingdoms in the Asante confederacy. He likewise received wives from those capitals. Not only did his daughters act as espionage agents, but they caused their husbands to think twice before advocating any anti-Kwaku Dua policies. Thus their marriages served their father's political ends. It was because of this that people would say fre 'call' Dua, Agye 'savior,' 'man' (of) nation.' Thus the name Fredua Agyeman was used for this shrewd political marriage arranger who saved or brought the nation together.[21]

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[20]Bosman, op. cit., p. 211.

[21]Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah.

Adultery cases were considered very serious and penalties could be quite severe. A man found guilty of adultery was fined heavily, the fine depending on the social level of his partner or her husband, and on his own ability to pay. Bosman reported having heard of "Fines amounting to above five thousand Pounds Sterling paid on account of Adultery."[22] In other cases, especially where a king's wife was violated, the culprit or both partners could be executed or the man castrated. Sometimes both could also be sold into slavery.

Family expansion and segmentation was a significant process in these coastal areas. Most of the villages and towns were originally started by one person who was later joined by his family, then other people joined them, some Freemen bringing their slaves, while those who had no slaves eventually bought some. The founder of the village had by then become the village or town head, at first as family head, Abosua Panin, and later as an Odekuro. If he was a good trader, farmer or fisherman, he could build up his village into a larger town, thereby rising from the position of a mere Odekuro to an Ohene or king.[23] This process also

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[22]Bosman, op. cit., p. 205.

[23]This development resembles the growth of the canoe house in the Niger Delta so well analyzed by G. I. Jones, Trading States of the Oil Rivers, London: Oxford University Press, 1963; and K. O. Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, London: Oxford University Press, 1956.

developed concurrently other Abosua Panin who were important in village or town affairs in their capacity as advisors to the Odekuro or Ohene. In the latter case some Abosua Panin became the Ahene Mpanyimfo, the king's elders.[24]

During the expansion period, particularly when small villages were being started within the radius of the town, the king or greater Odekuro arranged marriages which had considerable political consequence. Normally the person asked to keep the chief informed of events in the new settlements was either a family member, a close friend, or a servant categorized as a freeman or slave.[25] Depending on the quality of service rendered by either the slave or the freeman, the king could then make this informant an Odekuro, thereby creating a stool (political office) for the Odekuro's family. In order to strengthen the link between the king and this headman, the former would marry from the latter's family.[26] This action was important because it established

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[24]Most of the Akan clans trace their origin to the Pra-Offin confluence where according to Boahen "the Akan developed this clan system only after their arrival in the forest regions." G.N.Q., No. 9 (1966), p. 10. The Oyoko clan head, the Oyokohene, who lives in Kumasi is one of the most prominent Ahene in Kumasi with an equally significant role to play in Asante politics.

[25]The Bantamahene of Kumasi was elevated by Osei Tutu from a stool carrier to an important Ohene position before the Denkyera campaign. IAS/AS 39 and 40; Nana Owusu Ansah; Bantama stool historians Nananom Antwi Panin and Antwi Kuma.

[26]Tradition provided by Nkwantakesihene Nana Owusu Afriyie II and his elders; see also IAS/AS 136.

an ayete relationship between the two families. Secondly, it ensured that the new Odekuro would be related to the king: as a son, a nephew or a grandnephew.

The ayete relationship, to be discussed later in greater detail, established certain rights, duties and obligations on the two families involved. The king and his successors had a right, after the initial marriage, to claim a bride from the same family whenever they had no wife from that family already. On the other hand, the Odekuro family had a right to demand of any king that he take one of their daughters as a wife whenever he had no wife from that family at his palace. If the king did not "take the girl," custom required him to pay a fine. It was not necessary that every king marry a girl from each ayete family; he could inherit one who had been married to his predecessor. When the old king died, the new one succeeded to the stool and also took all the "stool wives."[27]

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[27]This tradition was given by several elders in Kumasi and Mampong. Bentamahene stool historians, op. cit.; Jamasihene, op. cit.; Nkwantakesehene, op. cit.; Jamasihene, op. cit. (Henceforth, whenever an oral historian has been initially identified, he will be referred to only by his official title. Most of the traditions cited in this were collected by the author between January and July, 1971. The author normally went to the informants Ahenfie--palace--or in cases where the elders trusted with this history were too old to come to the palace he went to their homes.) Akwamuhene Nana Akyamfuo Akowua Denteh II; Gyasehene Nana Opoku Mensah. Apparently the custom of inheriting stool wives extended beyond coastal Akan, because Phillips reports it in Dahomey: when the king of Whidah dies, "all his wives and estate fall to the next king" (Thomas Phillips, op. cit., p. 235.

The ayete relationship was not always established so as to vest on the male of higher status the right to marry girls of lower rank. It was also established so that the Odekuro male family married the sisters or matrilineal nieces of the king. This arrangement was desirable to both sides because it restricted marriage within families occupying high political offices. The earliest instance of such high level political marriage in Asante was between the Amakomhene's family and Osei Tutu's family. The son who was born to this marriage, Asantehene Opoku Ware I, had the dual political advantages of being a Prince of Amakomhene (Amakomhene's influence in Kumasi affairs was considerable before Osei Tutu) and a Prince of the Golden Stool whose aspiration was to expand the newly founded Asante confederacy.[28]

In cases where ayete marriage was not possible, the leadership was largely in the hands of people related to the king by blood or clan. For example, if the king was an Oyoko or Aduana by clan, and his informant was of the same clan, this provided political links as

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[28]Later several other families established ayeteship with the Golden Stool. The most important was the Mampong Stool, which was strengthened in the mid-eighteenth century by the marriage of Mamponghene Asono Gyima and Konadu Yiadom, the queen mother of Asante. Jamasihene Yaw Sekyere also married Ohene Afrewo, the sister of Asantehene Kofi Karikari and Mensa Bonsu. He is the father of the present queen mother and the grandfather of the present Asantehene. Tradition given by Mamponghemaa Nana Yaa Kyaa, Asantehemaa Nana Sewaa Nyaako and the Jamasihene.

effective as the marriage bonds. During Opoku Ware's expansion to the northwest, he gave the newly conquered land to his chiefs, who then left it under the administration of Adekuro (pl. of Odekuro) whom they appointed from among their own clans.[29] The Bantamahene's brother held one of these posts.[30]

The Government

This leads us to consider another institution besides the family: the government. Bosman observed and described two coastal governments (Axim and Ante) which he believed to be typical of the Gold Coast states. At Axim the government was in the hands of "the Body of Caboceiros or chief men" and the "Manceros or young Men," and their duties and powers were shared in a specified way:

> All Civil or Publick Affairs which commonly occur are under their Administration; but what concerns the whole Land, and are properly National Affairs, as making Peace and War, the raising Tributary Impositions to be paid to Foreign Nations (which seldom happens) that falls under the Cognisance of both Parts, or Members of Government. And on these occasions the Manceros often manage with a Superior Hand, especially if the Caboceiros are not very rich in Gold and Slaves, and consequently able by their assistance to bring over the other to their side.[31]

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[29]Tradition given by Anantahene Nana Appiah Dankwah II.

[30]Bantamahene stool historians, op. cit.

[31]Bosman, pp. 164-165. For Issini area see Godfrey Loyer's 'Abstract of a Voyage to Issini on the Gold Coast in 1701' in Astley, op. cit., pp. 422-23. Busia, who compares mancheros with commoners or youngmen, believes they played an important role in Asante

One of the major functions of the council of elders was to hear and adjudicate disputes or litigation between individuals or groups within their political territorial limits. Upon a complaint filed by one of the litigants, the king summoned his council to meet. At the same time he dispatched court messengers to fetch the respondent. While filing the complaint, the litigant was required to take presents of "Gold and brandy" to the king. In course of hearing the case, the court called upon witnesses from both sides to give evidence. If their evidence was not conclusive, the court asked the litigants to take an oath of purgation[32] made from specially prepared herbs which would kill or make sick anyone swearing falsely. These courts were satisfactory in the performance of their duties, as Bosman, though with some misgivings, observed:

> . . . Injustice very seldom or never occurs anywhere but at distant and far in-land Places, . . . Thus you see when a Law Suit is begun we can end it without the Assistance of Attorneys or Councellors in a much shorter time, and perhaps with as much Justice as where those Gentlemen are employed.[33]

Mancheros, who were likened to "judicial societies," also acted as judicial councils, but their jurisdiction

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society: they were consulted during the election of a new chief, they were informed of significant discussions which the elders held, they had a recognised spokesman called Nkwankwaahene whom they elected, their views were always considered by the elders' councils, and through their leader they expressed their "public opinion or criticism of government. Busia, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

[32] Ibid., p. 167.

[33] Ibid.

was limited to "trivial crimes" in every village.[34] This group acted as a police force, as is indicated by its cases ("beating, cursing or reviling one another") and by the manner in which they were adjudicated. The wronged person reported the offense to the Mancheros. The latter sent one or more members to go and arrest the accused and bring him back to the council, which heard the case and decided on acquittal or penalty. If the culprit was assessed a fine and refused to pay, the Mancheros enforced their decision by sending a few members to seize his own or his family's goods from the market or home in an amount equal to the fine. The group used this money to support itself.[35]

Besides acting as police, the Mancheros helped individuals in the society to recover their debts once a judgment had been handed down. Sometimes when the debtors were out of the Mancheros' territorial limits, they crossed the political boundary and took captives and goods to equal the value of the debt, in the hope that the debtor would then pay his creditors, thereby redeeming the captured people and goods. Sometimes this calculation misfired, especially when the debtor disputed the amount or was stronger militarily than the

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[34]Bosman, op. cit., p. 177.

[35]Ibid., For a recent study of the Mancheros groups which evolved to modern Asafo companies, see J. C. de Graft-Johnson, 'The Fanti Asafu,' in Africa, V (1932), pp. 307-22; Kwame Arhin, 'Diffuse Authority among the Coastal Fanti,' in G.N.Q., No. 9 (1966), pp. 66-70.

creditor. In such cases, the resulting inter-group war ended either with the creditor losing the battle and the money owed him or with his winning and recovering his debt along with as much booty as he could get. This booty formed the bulk of the soldiers' pay, although the elders ended up with the lion's share. Before inter-group conflicts commenced, the elders and Mancheros consulted each other and discussed the probably course of the struggle, the enemies' military strength, potential allies, and the outcome of the campaign.[36]

From these inter-group wars we can also deduce the size of the coastal nations. Most of them, with the exception of Akwamu, were rather small--nations that could raise only a few thousand men. Some were so small that it required an alliance of several of them to raise as few as 5000 men. Nations like Fanti, which could put an army of 25,000 onto the field, or Akwamu, which had a larger potential, were exceptions. Reports reaching the coast indicated that inland kingdoms "such as Akim and Asiante &c. are not to be reckoned amongst these; they being able to overrun a country by their numerous armies."[37] Bosman was writing at the peak of the Akwamu

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[36]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 179-180; Wilks, 'The Rise of Akwamu Empire,' op. cit.; Reindorf, op. cit., ch. V.

[37]Bosman, op. cit., p. 181. This is interesting because during this time Bosman was relying on the prestige of the Asante army after the defeat of Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari. He had written to his father about this war earlier, in his fourth letter, pp. 72-87.

kingdom's power, when it governed most of the coast from Bereku to Volta river. If his estimate of the number of men that Fante could raise is correct (and we can fairly well rely on his view, especially given his background and experience with the coastal states and their warfare), probably Akwamu could easily have raised an army of 40,000 men. We might therefore conservatively estimate that the Asante kingdom could have raised about twice as many soldiers as Fante. We might also suggest from this fluid political situation, which the Asante traders knew about and transmitted to their leaders, that the latter realized the advantages of a unified government. They could also have reached that conclusion after comparing the power of Akwamu--which was unified and rather centralized--to that of the coastal potentates, which were relatively powerless and constantly warring against each other.[38]

There were various political offices in the Coast. Heading the list was the Ohene, or king who was loosely the equivalent of a captain in European military

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[38]Of course the traditions indicating that Osei Tutu lived at Denkyera and then Akwamu would also lead us to conclude that he was well aware of the benefits of unified state compared to weak federation. The same can be said of his state co-founder Okomfo Anokye--a shrewd 'psychiatrist' and political observor--who was well-acquainted with these political arrangements. Reindorf , op. cit., writes of Osei Tutu and his stay in Denkyera: "It is certain, at all events, that the Denkyera king was superior to the Asante king in power and glory; and, in addition, Osei Tutu may have been sent there to study the politics of the Denkyeras," p. 51.

terms. He was a "commander of a country, town or nation."[39] The monarch's social position and power was influenced by the amount of wealth at his disposal, his most important possessions being gold and slaves. The former could be translated into power for short- or long-term purposes; for example, it would buy weapons and pay mercenaries from neighboring states for his campaigns, or buy more slaves to put to productive work trading, fishing, or fighting--for himself and the state. It was the stool wealth, too, that determined the king's way of life: the number of wives he married, his attendants, and the degree of his conspicuous consumption.[40] This consumption could be observed in such symbols as state umbrellas used by the king, ambassadorial canes used by his Akyeame, gold ornaments worn by the king and his wives, and palanquins.[41] It would be erroneous for us to

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[39]Bosman, op. cit., p. 188. He was also compared to the "Master of Ships" or Director-General and chief of [Dutch] forts.

[40]There is a tradition in Asante about one of the Kyidomhene who was so rich that he challenged the decisions of the Asantehene. He bragged about the barrels of gold dust he had, as well as the number of slaves. However in the course of the power struggle that resulted from this arrogance he lost most of this wealth. Besides, some of his villages were eventually given to Atipinhene. Information provided by Kyidomhene Oheneba Osei Yaw and his elders. See Kyidomhene stool history. IAS/AS 158.

[41]Most of the regalia used by the Akan societies of Ghana are described in A. A. Y. Kyeramaten, The Panoply of Ghana, London: Oxford University Press, 1965. One of the controversies in Mampong history in the 1960's was the promotion of an Odekuro of Jamasihene into an Ohene with rights to ride on a palanquin. The

conclude that a marked distinction existed between the king and other prominent individuals in the society. Rich men in the kingdom had power that equaled or rivaled the king's, and he needed their advice. The distinction, however, was greater than Bosman believed.[42] The rigidity of social distinction seems to have varied according to the size of the kingdom and its wealth, being more noticeable in large, rich kingdoms than in small, poor ones. Bosman is referring to the latter category of kings when he says that some served Europeans as "foot-boys" or in a meaner capacity, that the princesses had to work very hard on the farm, and that the Europeans assisted or hired kings to fight each other, so as to obtain more slaves for trans-Atlantic ships.[43] There were several powerful monarchs on the Gold Coast. Writing of Adom kingdom early in the 1680's, Barbot, observing that their wealth rested in trade and "several gold mines within their own

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Jamasihene assured the author that the palanquin was a prestigious symbol of a chief who serves the Omanhene directly. This was the basis for Jamasihene's complaint against the promotion, without his consent, of one of his Adekuro. Tradition given by Jamasihene and his elders.

[42] Bosman, op. cit., pp. 190-2.

[43] For example, the size and wealth of the King of Whida was such that when Bosman was there, he was able to support over 1000 wives, all "dressed in the richest and most splendid manner." They did not have to work in the farm all day, but rather stayed home to keep the king company, away from the view of other men. Bosman, op. cit., pp. 360-361.

territories," says: "Their wealth and numbers have so puffed them up, that those who are to deal with them, ought to behave themselves with singular discretion.[44] They controlled the trade routes to the coast and had the power to block them to protect their own economic or political interests. The Dutch paid annual rent to the African kings for the lease of the fort land. From Axim to Fante there were smaller powers. But the ruler of Fante, whose government was characterized as "a sort of common-wealth," was a Braffo, a term which was synonymous with commander or leader. He shared his power with an assembly of elders who restricted his authority. Thus "he is in the nature of the chief governor, having the greatest power of any man in the dominion; but is kept in awe by the old man, somewhat in the nature of a parliament; and acting as they think fit, without ever consulting the Braffo."[45] Other parts of the country were governed by lesser assemblies, leaving the Braffo with "an empty title without any power."

At Anomabo the ruler and his council had the power to effect the change of English factors whom they did not like. If the Africans there did not like a factor, "they sent him away in a canoe to Cape Corso,

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[44]John Barbot, op. cit., pp. 152-153.

[45]Ibid., p. 175. See also Dapper, op. cit., pp. 284-85.

or oblige him to pay a heavy fine."[46] Such behavior was not unusual in this Fante area, for the entire Fante nation was so rich that it was arrogant of its power: "The great wealth of Fantians makes them so proud and haughty, that an European trading there must stand bare to them."[47] Obviously the Fante ability to blockade trade with the Europeans by closing the passage to the coast must be credited to the power of the Fante Braffo and his councillors. A blockade meant that the Europeans could not get any inland goods, could not unload their merchandise and could not get food for the ships.[48] At a time when the best slaves in demand in the New World reputedly came from Cormantin, this would be quite a blow to the foreigners.

Another powerful and wealthy king ruled over Acron. His power was limited by the elders who could approve or veto his policies. When Barbot was visiting the coast in the 1680's, the king was upwards of fifty years old, and had the reputation of being one of the richest men in the Gold Coast."[49] East of Acron in

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[46] Ibid., p. 177.

[47] Ibid. When Barbot was visiting the Gold Coast the trade had been steadily rising in the last two decades. Gold which was the most important item that the Royal African Company exported from this region amounted to £250,000 between 1682-92. K. G. Davies, The Royal African Company, London: Longmans, 1957, p. 225, see also Appendix II, p. 360.

[48] Davies, op. cit., pp. 260-61.

[49] Barbot, op. cit., p. 180.

Agona kingdom the ruler was a queen who had remained single in order to retain the state power in her own hands. Next to Agona lay the kingdom of Accra, which at the time Barbot was there was already a tributary of the Akwamu kingdom. Barbot states that the king of Accra's power extended over numerous lesser kings located all along the coast over a distance of above twenty leagues. He therefore was the middle hierarchy administrator of these kingdoms for his overlord, the Akwamuhene.[50] The basis of the power in these areas of the coast was the strategic location of Accra and its three European-owned forts (James Fort, owned by the British; Crevecoeur, owned by the Dutch, and Christianborg, owned by the Danes), and the large trade carried on there. According to Barbot, trade at Accra was ". . . so considerable, notwithstanding the calamities of war, or famine, this country has long laboured under, that it may well be said, this place alone, furnished more gold and slaves than the whole coast besides."[51] Accra was the sea outlet for the inland trade with the Akim and Kwahu countries to the north and northwest, who wanted an alliance with the Akwamu. The latter, however, subtly declined such an alliance by promoting "discord between the governors of Akim, by means of fair

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[50] Ibid., p. 181.

[51] Ibid., p. 182.

gifts, whereby he preserves his country in peace and in a condition to enjoy the trade."[52] Thus the coast was not wanting in powerful rulers, Bosman to the contrary notwithstanding.

Further inland there were other kings whose power or territorial extensions were relatively unknown in the coast. An exception was Akwamu, which was both a coastal and an inland power. The kingdom was reputedly very wealthy and populous, partly because its inhabitants carried on extensive commerce all along the coast. Some of them even settled on the coast and acted as "brokers for many of their country men who are considerable dealers."[53] There is only limited information about the other inland powers. The kingdom of Wassah was widely known for her large quantities of gold, which her merchants could probably have bought from the north. Abramboe kingdom was on the decline following a prosperous trade with the Dutch; and the merchants of Kwawu traded with Abonee, and the coastal cities of Great Ningo and Accra.[54]

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[52] Ibid. See also Ivor Wilks, "The Rise of Akwamu Empire 1650-1710," pp. 99-136.

[53] We should note, however, that the geographical location that Barbot gives for Akwamu kingdom was faulty--it did not correspond to the location for the same group shown in his map. Compare his map page 148 and his description on pp. 188-189.

[54] Ibid. In some of the countries where there was little gold and trade, people engaged in farming, herding and fishing so that no one starved: ". . . no person goes about beggin; which is a thing highly

The King and His Administrators

It is now necessary to examine the process through which the new king came to office. This is of particular interest because it indicates the power behind the throne. Here again the author will have to lean heavily on Barbot and Bosman for the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. When the king died, an elective council met and chose his brother or nearest relative for the vacant stool. Sometimes the council would go against tradition and appoint someone not related to the late king. This violation of constitution seems to have occurred in smaller kingdoms with rich men who had considerable political influence over the electors. Such, for example, was the case in Fetu kingdom.[55] This has two implications: First, that the king's power was not absolute, and second, that the people had the right to choose the person they thought could best perform the state function. A peculiarity of succession in Saboe was that the electing body was not obliged to choose the new king from the royal family of the deceased monarch. Instead they gave the crown to a stranger "of the royal family or the neighboring country."[56] This, too, was probably

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commendable in the government of blacks," p. 256.

[55] Ibid., p. 286.

[56] Ibid., p. 286. For a related case see the election of the king in Issini area described by Loyer, op. cit., p. 443.

due to fear that the late monarch had entrenched interests within the country (one could say conflict of interest) which would prevent a member of his family from objectively performing the duties of the king.

Once elected, the king was expected to be fair to his subjects. One way he interacted with them was by distributing food and drinks to all of his people who came to the palace. The king was given palm wine and other drinks either as tax or for some service, such as adjudicating a case. He, in turn, shared these drinks with his elders at the court. There was a circular expectation here which had characteristics of the potlatch system common among Indians in northwestern United States. The monarch was in this role a gathering and distribution center for goods and services for his subjects.[57] He spent a lot of time and money entertaining, while his subjects gave him the wherewithal to do so. According to Barbot, when the kings were generous in this regard, the "people never cease extolling the magnanimity and generosity of their princes, especially if they treat them with palm wine and other strong liquors and provisions; considering that such prodigalities continually put their sovereigns upon seeking means to increase their revenues by new

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[57]The Asante Ahene still retain this role. Tradition given by Samanghene stool historians. See also the role of the Asantehene's Akyeamehene. IAS/AS 43.

duties and impositions."[58]

The new king also consolidated his power soon after election. The methods used then were not very different from those still used today in Asante. He influenced the destoolment of the lesser kings whom he did not like or who did not support him, and had them replaced with his friends and followers, while at the same time being careful not to alienate those who might cause his downfall. He did this by means of a typical political maneuver:

> For the most part, there, as usual in all other parts of the world, upon devolution of crowns he puts many into offices, to promote his own friends and adherants, only taking care to continue some of those, who had the greatest interest with his precessor, and are most in esteem among the people, for fear of alienating the minds of his subjects, but rather to gain applause; always endeavouring to be very popular, and exercising much liberality. . . .[59]

When a king failed to observe this discretion, he risked being deposed.

There were other people in the political arena who helped the king to rule. Of these, the most

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[58] Ibid. Besides tax payment in gold-dust, the kings received other taxes in king. It was this food and other material objects that the king used to support himself and his retinue and to meet his other expectations. When Osei Kwadwo commissioned Adontenhene Kwamina Pete to conquer the Yendi monarch, he imposed upon them a tributary tax of "1000 slaves, 1000 cattle, 1000 sheep and 1000 fowls." Kwamina Pete was paid ten percent of this annually. Francis Fuller, A Vanished Dynasty: Ashanti, 2nd edition, London: Frank Cass Ltd., 1968, pp. 34-35.

[59] Ibid., p. 249.

important were the council of elders, the analysis of which we shall defer for the moment, and the administrators. But we cannot discuss the latter without a glimpse at the social stratification which is closely connected with their recruitment. The coastal society was divided into five levels: the kings or captains on the top; the lesser kings or caboceiros, that is, "chief governors or magistrates in civil affairs"; the nobles or rich men, ". . . those, who either by inheritance or their own industry in traffick are possessed of much money and many slaves"; the commoners, such as fishermen, weavers, husbandmen, wine-drawers and lesser merchants; and finally, slaves, who had been sold by their relatives or had been captured in war.[60] In the third group would be included the princes who could inherit positions of property from neither their fathers nor their uncles.[61] In the fourth category we might include those of the king's servants who did not hold the title of Ohene, but were entrusted with duties that might have been performed by an Ohene. These would include the "sabre-bearers, tie-tie's, that is,

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[60]Barbot, op. cit., p. 286.

[61]These are nowadays known as Adehye Mrantie. Their descendants' status declined as time went on and they became Ohenenanom or grandchildren or great-grandchildren to the king. Some of these Ohenenanom were eligible to marry the royal princesses, thereby raising their status again. The husband of the present queen mother is an Ohenenana. Information from Asantehemaa, op. cit.

publick Criers or Proclaimers, Attendants on their [king's] Wives, Horn-blowers or Trumpeters and Drummers."[62] The number of these officers was contingent on the size of the kingdom, which also determined the presence or absence of a titled officer in charge of officials performing a given function. For example, in larger kingdoms like Asante there was one Ohene for the horn-blowers and another for the drummers. In smaller kingdoms where only one or two officials performed a given function, there was no titled chief.[63] Those individuals who were categorized as slaves sometimes did non-menial jobs, such as drumming,[64] weaving or smithery, and could be grouped together with the commoners because of their specialized occupation. The fifth group includes those slaves who did non-specialized jobs: farm workers, carriers under supervision, sweepers and other household servants.[65]

Individuals in groups two, three and four performed important functions for the state. Those in

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[62]Bosman, op. cit., p. 193.

[63]Rattray, Ashanti Law, Chapter XVII-XXII dealing with the constitutions of various component kingdoms in the Asante union.

[64]During their expansion in the eighteenth century the Mampong people captured certain drummers who were given the same job when they got to Mampong. Information given by Okyeame Apritwum of Mampong.

[65]For the list of various positions occupied by some of these low rank servants in an Akan state see Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 91.

group two combined executive, judicial and legislative functions, which they shared with the king. They came to the court regularly and met with the king, deliberated needed laws, heard cases involving legal violations or made policy decisions. When they went back to their constituencies they met their lower rank elders and transmitted the proceedings of the higher council to them. In smaller states the sword-bearers also performed the role of ambassadors to foreign countries, although they shared these functions with the public criers, who, Bosman observed, could be "sent by their Masters on National Errands to Friends or Enemies, their caps being an effectual freepass everywhere, supposing them to be sent by their Master: . . ."[66] The sword-bearers were also the linguists at the court.[67] When they were sent on foreign missions they used their master's special cane as a proof that they were bona fide ambassadors or messengers of a particular king.[68]

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[66]Bosman, op. cit., p. 194.

[67]Diplomacy was a very important aspect of the Akan politics, not only on the coast, but also in the interior. In his conversations with Dupuis, Asantehene Osei Bonsu made this clear when he stressed: ". . . it was a maxim associated with the religion he professed [Dupuis' italics], never to appeal to the sword while a path lay open for negociation," op. cit., p. 226.

[68]The use of Akyeame as we know it today can probably be traced back to the time of the bigger states. Since the early nineteenth century, whenever an Okyeame was sent on a mission by his king, he was accompanied by sword-bearers and, depending on the nature of the mission, by other consulants as part of

The public crier's normal occupation was partly that of a public relations officer for the king, announcing lost or stolen items and new decrees and laws, and partly that of a bailiff, maintaining order whenever any important meeting was in progress. These officers are still seen today in Asante and the coastal areas whenever traditional council meetings are held. One still hears the public criers beat their gongs in the evenings in Asante towns.[69]

There was still another group of important officers in the coast at the turn of the seventeenth century. These were the "Attendants to the King's Wives," who mainly took "care that no Strangers pluck the Fruit of their Masters Orchard."[70] They also seem

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his retinue. Hutton writes that in 1820 the Asantehene sent Prince Adum, his nephew, to Cape Coast with "servants and bearers in considerable number" as advisors. W. Hutton, A Voyage to Africa, Including a Narrative to One of the Interior Kingdoms in the Year 1820. London: Longmans, 1821, p. 128. Later on the same century, Boakye Tenten was sent to the Coast to settle the gold Axe affair, accompanied by over 350 high-ranking advisors and other attendants. Claridge, op. cit., II, Ch. XI.

[69]The public crier beats the gong to attract the attention of the citizens just before he makes his announcement. If the king's message was very important and of an emergency nature, it was transmitted from the town to the villages by the talking drum.

[70]Bosman, op. cit., p. 194. The tradition upcountry is that this was the work of the eunuchs who had been castrated for violating sex laws. But apparently this was not the case, for Bosman thought that some of these attendants used their position to gain favors with the king's wives.

to be the predecessor of the future Sanahene/Foto-safohene in Asante, for they were the national treasurers: "They are also entrusted with all the King's Treasury: of which they carry the Keys, for they are not trusted to any besides them, and consequently they are the only Persons who after the King's Decease are obliged to give an account of his treasury."[71] The word sanaa was probably introduced into the Akan State of Bono-Mansu in the fourteenth century by Nana Obunumankoma, the king, who had reportedly traveled to North Africa as far as Egypt. Its original meaning was "royal treasury," which was the department that handled the national gold dust currency and standard gold weights used in measuring gold dust.[72] The Asante later came to refer to the royal treasurer as Sanaahene. He was the person who, according to tradition, weighed the gold dust brought to the capital for the Asantehene. He was also responsible for testing it to determine its purity. It was his duty to ensure the precision of the instruments for weighing this gold.[73] The

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[71] Ibid., p. 195.

[72] Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, p. 34.

[73] It seems probable that the functions of this office, the specialization and handcraftsmanship it required are related to the Swahili meaning of the word Sanaa. (See F. Johnson, Kamusi ya Kiswahili, London: Sheldon Press, 1970, p. 196.) We can thus confidently conclude two things: that indeed the word is a loan from Arabic; and that it was the word that was borrowed, but not necessarily the function, since on the coast there was a royal treasury that was not called Sanaa.

The Sanaahene dealt with gold, the only metal used for currency. Other taxes, paid in kind, were taken care of by other attendants at the palace: the food was given to the kitchen attendants and drinks to Nsahene.[74] The Sanahene's post was profitable and commanded considerable respect because of his closeness to the monarch, "defraying the charges of the kings household, paying the soldiers, and other expenses of the state."[75]

Closely connected with household attendants were the drummers and horn-blowers. The former assisted the public criers in announcing emergancy meetings. Their main job, though, was to entertain the court during the funerals and other festivals and ceremonies. The horn-blowers, besides entertaining the king, also accompanied him when he traveled out of the capital. Later they became the king's traders.[76]

Barbot refers to an officer called Day in Fetu

Prof. Khouri, a native speaker of Egyptian Arabic, who teaches Arabic at U.C., Berkeley, informs me that sannaa means "an excellent or outstanding craftsman." The Sanaahene, in conformity with that definition, was the head of all the craftsmen dealing with national gold and jewelry. Apparently the original meaning of Sanaa was not connected with treasurer. The name for the latter in Arabic is khazin. (Information provided by Prof. Khouri over the telephone.)

[74]Even today there is a person whose responsibility it is to receive and distribute the king's drinks according to the Asantehene's instruction.

[75]Barbot, op. cit., p. 290.

[76]Nana Owusu Ansah, op. cit.; See also Asokwahene-Batahene Stool history, IAS/AS 1.

kingdom who acted the role of the Prime Minister. He represented the king in "his absence and acting in the government, both in civil and military as his deputy."[77] It is not clear who this officer was in those days. He could have been the overall commander of the army such as Nifahene, or the Kontirehene or head linguist.[78]

We must now briefly analyze the institution dealing with the administration of justice. The administration of justice was in the hands of officers, appointed by the king, who had the power to appoint their subordinate officers as necessary. The higher ranks of the court system were filled by the wealthiest citizens or nobles such as "Braffos or caboceiros and governors of towns and villages assisted by the priests of those places as substitutes."[79] They tried criminal and civil cases in their areas of jurisdiction, but the citizens had the right to appeal important cases to the king's court, which was supreme in the land. The Asante court system had been well developed by the middle of the eighteenth century, following the teachings of Okomfo Anokye. The supreme court of Asante

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[77]Barbot, op. cit., p. 290.

[78]David Birmingham, "A Note on the Kingdom of Fetu,' in G.N.Q., No. 9 (1966), pp. 30-33, writes that "one of Day's tasks was to defend the European traders against their enemies. For this service each European nation had to pay three or four or more ounces of gold each month as protection money to Day," p. 31.

[79]Barbot, op. cit., p. 299.

was made up of the nobles of the land, Abirempong, who were Asantehene's advisors. Attached to this supreme court were the linguists, led by their chief linguist, the Akyeamehene, whose responsibility was to present the two sides of the case and state the judgment reached.[80] In the court there were no counsels or attorneys, but everyone argued his own case; a very strict court procedure forbade interrupting any party before he finished stating his case. The judgment was passed after all evidence was heard and assessed "fully according the merits of their [contestants'] suit; with much show of decency and reason."[81] In some areas there was an annually appointed time when all the citizens with any kind of dispute met at an ad hoc national court to have their differences settled by the king and his aides. The charges levied by the court depended upon the oath taken the trial and were divided in a set manner between the king and his elders.[82] The cases that the court had to deal with included adultery, the most serious offense, robbery, adulterating gold, debts and murder. Once the court passed its judgment, it was obeyed without resistance. For example, if someone stole some property, the judgment was to return the stolen property and pay

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[80]Fuller, op. cit., p. 20.

[81]Barbot, op. cit., p. 299.

[82]Ibid., p. 300.

a fine proportionate to its value. Fines were sometimes determined by the culprit's ability to pay. The richer the culprit, the heavier was the fine. Kidnapping was very severely punished--at times by death. Stealing livestock was also a serious offense.[83]

The people involved in public and judicial administration were also connected with or identical to the military organization. In most of the coast there was no standing army such as one finds in the Western nations today. Rather, the army consisted of all able-bodied men fit to bear arms--a musket, a shield, bows, arrows, daggers, swords and spears.[84] Those not expected to fight included old men, cripples, and of course, women, though there are instances of women taking arms in defense of the capital when the army was away and the defense guard was overpowered by invaders.[85] The organization of the army, as with other institutions, depended on the size of the state--in small states there was greater individual independence. For example, on the coast when the individuals went to

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[83] Ibid., pp. 302-303.

[84] Chevalier des Marchais, A Voyage to Guinea and the Adjacent Islands in 1725, in Thomas Astley, op. cit., pp. 692-693; Bosman, op. cit., pp. 84-86.

[85] There are traditions in Kumasi that when Asantehene Opoku Ware I was away fighting in Akim, the Sefwi army attacked Kumasi; the women tried to resist but were overcome. When the battle for Kumasi was lost the Sefwi army took captives Opoku Ware's mother and other members of the Asante royal family. Hia Stool History, IAS/AS 154.

war, what was uppermost in their minds was their personal gain, as opposed to their loyalty to the king. This was even more so in areas like Elmina or Cape Coast where there were a significant number of rich men whose favor the king courted. It was not usual in these states for individuals to hire themselves out as mercenaries to the neighboring states. This was due to political realignments, which were very fluid and unpredictable in the coast at that time. Furthermore, the soldier received no fixed monthly salary. These factors cannot be overlooked in analyzing the armed forces.[86]

However, as the states increased in size, several things happened which affected the military. The national income rose, the stratification of social levels became more clearly defined, complex controls were devised to ensure smooth operation of the army--strict discipline, allegiance to the national cause and various rewards other than personal gain. On one hand, there was an attempt to centralize the army while at the same time ensuring a certain degree of local autonomy, exercised by the commanders. This was possible because of the structural organization: in kingdoms like Denkyera, Akwamu, Akim and Asante, the monarch was the commander-in-chief. Below him were various

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[86]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 178-181.

[87]Barbot, op. cit., p. 295.

Abirempong generals or kings who ranked next to him. Each of these raised and commanded an army of his own.[87] Each Obirempong was assigned to a specific position during the campaign, such as the right side, the left, the rearguard, or the main body. If the king came to war he was very well guarded, because if he was captured the ransom would be prohibitively high, or else he would be killed for fear that, once ransomed, he would mount another campaign.[88]

The development of these state armies was a response to military demands for either offensive or defensive action. When Kumasi was invaded by Obiri Mru while Opoku Ware I was waging a campaign in Akim, the Asantehene responded by creating another army division for guarding the capital while the main army was away. This was later put under the commander appropriately named Ankobiahene, 'the king of the division that goes nowhere.' Another division was created under Anantahene to balance or check the power of Bantamahene during or soon after the death of Osei Tutu.[89]

Their successes in war were the result of a combination of courage and tactics. During the campaign they shrewdly utilized noise and music from drums, trumpets, horns, and the cries of attacking soldiers.

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[88]Bosman, op. cit., pp. 181-183.

[89]According to tradition provided by Anantahene op. cit., the first Anantahene was a faithful servant of Osei Tutu.

From the descriptions, the fighting commonly took the form of hand-to-hand combat, shooting thick showers of arrows at the enemy, and ambushes.[90] One of these ambushes, which occurred in 1570, has been related in Astley. It reveals the African dexterity in using terrain to their advantage when confronted by a powerful adversary:

> These Negros are pretty expert also at surprizing an Enemy by Ambuscade . . . In 1570, the Portuguese at el Mina being in War with the People of Kommendo and Fetu, with a vast Army, not only drove away the inhabitants of these Towns, but destroyed the Country with Fire and Sword. The Negros assembling in a Wood, through which the Portuguese were to pass in their Return, lay in Ambuscade, and attacked them unprepared so warmly, that above three hundred were killed, fifty of whose Heads the Dutch saw placed round the grave belonging to one of the Negro Kings killed in the fight.[91]

This was the same tactic that the Asante used against the invading Denkyera army, which they had lured deeper into the Asante territory by calculated retreats.[92]

Declaration of war was the responsibility of the king and his council of state. War was brought about by various causes: interruption of trade, desire for plunder, recovery of debts,[93] insults between high-ranking people, robbery, defiance of authority by sub-

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[90]Marchais, op. cit., p. 694.

[91]Ibid., p. 695. It was a normal expectation to decapitate outstanding enemy leaders as a proof of one's bravery and as a demonstration that the enemy was indeed dead. This is an old tradition, found not only among the Akan but all over the Guinea coast.

[92]Fuller, op. cit., p. 17; Nana Owusu Ansah.

subordinate states, or disputes over taxes. Sometimes one state sent its town criers, sword-bearers or Akyeame to state the causes for possible war and request amicable settlement. If this friendly approach was rejected, war was declared. But in other cases there was no formal declaration of war: one side simply attacked the other without any prior warning, although the attack was usually not entirely unexpected. These wars did not end quickly; sometimes they lasted for as long as three months. Finally, when one side was overcome, it sued for peace and promised to pay a considerable amount of indemnity. The peace treaty was concluded when the kings of the two warring countries took the oath (or fetish). Often it was necessary to exchange hostages of high birth as a demonstration of goodwill. These people were kept as security in the respective countries, where they were well treated but carefully watched:

> These are, first, finely painted and adorned, and then borne on the shoulders of their king's Guard to the Residence of him with whom they are to abide, who treats them handsomely; but has them narrowly watched, to prevent their escape.[94]

These hostages were often sons or nephews of kings or nobles. The scene after the conclusion of a treaty and

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[93]Marchais, op. cit., pp. 696-97.

[94]Astley, op. cit., p. 697. This was an old custom here which was also used between a state and its vassals. According to tradition Osei Tutu had been sent to Denkyerahene's court as a royal hostage from the Kumasihene. He was a sword-bearer.

exchange of hostages truly marked the end of hostilities and was a welcome moment for the troops from both sides. In one instance such a treaty was concluded between Fante and Akim, and ". . . the Drums and Trumpets began to sound. The parties threw down their Arms, mingling with, and embracing each other. The Day passed in Dancing and Singing, and Commerce was renewed, as if no Quarrel had happened."[95]

Economic Institutions

The most important of the economic institutions were the markets or the trading centers. Several empires on the southern Sahara had risen to prominence before the sixteenth century because they controlled the markets and the trade routes leading to those markets. The growth of the Akan states on the Guinea forest and coast was strongly influenced by their control of markets and trade routes.[96] Ahanta, Kommenda,

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[95] Marchais, op. cit., p. 697.

[96] I. Wilks, 'The Northern Factor in Ashanti History: Begho and the Mande,' in J.A.H., II (1961), 1:25-34. When this trade was diverted to the south as a result of the demand for African gold by the Europeans it contributed significantly to the rise of forest region states, such as Denkyera, and later Asante. Daaku observes that at her zenith Denkyera "had virtually controlled the trade to all European establishments from Anomabo in the east to Axim in the west, . . ." And when Asante fought it not only waged wars for punitive purposes but also for "territorial aggrandisement mainly aimed at securing control over the sources of commodities and routes leading to the important northern as well as southern trading centres." Kwame Daaku, 'A Note on the Fall of Ahwene Koko and its Significance in Asante History,' G.N.Q., No. 10 (1968), pp. 40-41.

Fante, Agona, Accra and Ningo all grew up as a result of their trading position: first, before the coming of Europeans, as sources of fish and salt for the forest region and as consumers of grain, fruit and vegetables from inland; second, during the European era, as the seaports with markets were both foreign and local trade was carried on, with gold, ivory, food and slaves for the ships, and foreign goods and coastal food for the inland trade.[97] Further inland were smaller kingdoms like Wassa, Denkyera, Akwamu, Akim and Kumasi, which were to grow larger in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as trade decreased with the Sahara and increased on the coast.[98] The growing power of Denkyera, which was south of Kumasi and located on the north-south trade route, may be attributed to this trade up to the middle of the seventeenth century. After that, she gained control of Wassa state, through which passed another north-south trade route, and her influence increased, as did her wealth. In the 1680's, when we hear of a war inland, probably between Denkyera and this western vassal, we find shortages of gold all along the

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[97]Dapper, op. cit., p. 289.

[98]The author here does not support the traditional viewpoint that the coastal states rose solely as a result of slave trade. It was more than that, as Kwame Y. Daaku admirably shows in his Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1600-1720. A Study of the African Reaction to European Trade, London: Oxford University Press, 1970.

coast from Axim to Shama.[99]

In the same century, Kommenda and Fante, which would probably have developed into even bigger states, were prevented from doing so by the European meddling with African politics.[100] The Portuguese would seek allies from one African state against another African state, which was probably supported by the Dutch or English, and vice-versa. The Kommenda and Fante realized, too, what was at stake, and neither of them was willing to submit to the domination of the other without armed resistance. Further east, the Ga had developed a moderately strong state which was to succumb to the expanding Akwamu empire in the 1680's. The latter, however, did not stay in power for long, for no sooner had it risen to power than its neighbors to the north, the Akim, attacked. This, together with the revolt of Akwapim, reduced Akwamu to a small state northeast of Accra by the 1730's.[101]

Directly to the northwest of Akim and northest of Denkyera, another state was exerting her influence.

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[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.; see also K. Y. Daaku, 'The European Traders and the Coastal States, 1630-1720,' in T.H.S.G. VIII (1965), pp. 11-23. Dapper, op. cit., pp. 283-286.

[101] Ibid.; I. Wilks, 'The rise of the Akwamu Empire,' op. cit.; Ole Justesen, 'Aspects of Eighteenth Century Ghanaian History as Revealed by Danish Sources,' in G.N.Q., No. 12 (1972), pp. 9-12.

This was Asante, whose capital, Kumasi, was located on the same north-south trade route but farther north from Denkyera. While Denkyera was fighting with her western vassals in the 1680's, her eastern vassal, Asante, was beginning to gain from the trade that had been diverted from the Wassa route. At the same time, the interruption of trade in the east by the Akim-Akwamu wars gave an added boost to Asante trade. These two factors obviously aided the rise of Asante. Her trade increased not only from the interior to the coast, but also from the coast to the interior. A look at the map of Ghana reveals Kumasi's geographical advantages.[102] Five of the most important Amantuo in the Asante confederacy--Adanse, Bekwai, Esumegya, Kumasi and Mampong--are on the trade route from Cape Coast to Kumasi and Kumasi to Salaga. Of the other two states, Nsuta is an hour's walk from Mampong, and Juaben is less than an hour's walk from the nearest point on this route.[103] So we can conclude that these Amantuo not only had traditional ties based on their common dispersal point, but even more important, that they were trading partners who controlled trade and markets all along this route and benefited by tolls collected from the traders.[104]

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[102]See Appendix.

[103]From Agona which is the town founded by Okomfo Anokye, Osei Tutu's contemporary.

[104]This conclusion is not far-fetched. Prof. Vansina shows a similar situation in the southern

Asante consolidated her control of this trade route by several steps within the first few decades of the eighteenth century. First, by successfully defeating Denkyera, she was able to continue her trade control on this region as far as Wassa and even down to Axim. Second, by defeating the Akim, she was able to assure the control of trade through that country. Third, since the power of Akwamu had been broken, the threat from that side was not serious, so the small trade that reached the coast on the routes between Mampong and the western bank of the Volta river was diverted through Mampong and Kumasi.[105] Fourth, later in the century, during the reign of Osei Kwame, the Asante were able to extend their control of this region across the Volta river to Yendi through a combination of conquest and diplomatic agreements with the king of Dahomey.[106] Fifth, through the conquests of Opoku

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savanna grassland, where several kingdoms rose through their control of trade routes, financing their expansion through trade revenues. Even political marriages like those resulting in increased alliances and further state developments among the savanna states also took place here in Asante especially between the Mampong and Kumasi ruling houses. See J. Vansina, Kingdoms of the Savanna, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966.

[105]One of the instructions that Capt. Lonsdale and George Fergusson had in the last decade of the nineteenth century when they travelled into this region was to see how trade could be directed from markets located there (Salaga) to the coast by a direct route through Krobo. R. La T. Lonsdale, 'Report on Journey to Kumasi and Salaga,' in Affairs of the Gold Coast, Great Britain, C. 3386 (1882).

[106]The Asante-Dahomey diplomatic contacts had

Ware I, the trade from the northern markets of the kingdomes of Kong, Gyaman and Gonja reached the coast through Kumasi.[107]

Markets and Trade Routes

But before examining the details of the Kumasi developments, let us see what can be learned about the control of the markets and trade routes on the coast. For Axim there is an account of the famous John Konny (a corruption of the common Akan name Kwamina), who was a prominent merchant there and who was in constant conflict with the Dutch at the turn of the seventeenth century when the Brandenburgers left the coast. Initially, the foreign ships anchored there for wood and water.[108] It was also customary for them to pay, not only for wood, but also for water, until one of the ship captains refused to pay for the latter. John, to assert his authority, threatened to attack the uncooperative captain, stating that he was indeed the master

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been started during the reign of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo when a "friendly embassy arrived at the capital with presents from Abomey, announcing the succession of a new sovereign. This flattering deputation excited public rejoicings throughout the empire." Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 243-44.

[107] Ibid., p. 233.

[108] John Atkins, in Astley, op. cit., p. 449. Each ship was charged an ounce of gold for water. Between 1682-92 an ounce of gold was worth £4. By 1721 when Atkins was trading in Axim the value had probably gone up since there was less supply of this metal reaching the coast. Davies, op. cit., p. 225.

of his town.[109] In the ensuing conflict, John emerged the winner.

John was well known by most of the European traders, and for good reason. He knew the value of controlling trade, whether with the Africans not allied to him, or with the Europeans. He was also familiar with the historical traditions of his country, and he put this knowledge to use during one of the most outstanding confrontations he had with the Dutch. The Brandenburger trade had been declining since the 1680's,[110] never to recover again. To cut down their losses, the Brandenburgers decided to sell their castle in Axim to the Dutch. According to one account, they left the castle under the care of John Konny, who was expected to deliver it to the Dutch when they came. John himself claimed that they never informed him that the castle had been sold to the Dutch. He believed that the castle had been left in his own hands.[111] The basis for this belief was that his ancestors had leased the land to the Brandenburgers with an understanding, either implicit or explicit, that when they ceased to

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[109]According to Atkins, John Conny swore: "By G-- me King here, not only for my water, but the trouble has been given me in collecting it." Astley, op. cit., p. 449.

[110]At one time a Brandenburger merchant complained that for a period of two months he had bought less than two or three ounces of gold.

[111]William Smith, 'A Voyage to Guinea in 1726,' in Astley, op. cit., p. 477.

operate it, it would pass to the lessors of the land--the Axim Africans. Soon after the Brandenburgers went bankrupt and left, the Dutch appeared to claim the castle from John.[112] After prolonged negotiation, with John demanding a document from the first owners to prove the validity of the Dutch claim there was a deadlock. Then John asserted categorically that the land belonged to his ancestors, who had leased it to the first owners. He further explained to the Dutch that the lease did not authorize the sale of the land, and that the only right that the Brandenburgers had was to the stones and other material that they had used to build the fort. The Dutch, not satisfied with reasoning, went back to their ship and then sent out armed sailors. John retaliated in kind, and in the aftermath several Dutchmen lost their lives, while the rest retreated to their ships and sailed back to Elmina to prepare for attack.[113]

John is probably a classic example of the coast men who knew the economic basis of their power--trade--

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[112] Ibid.

[113] John Atkins, 'A Voyage to Guinea, Brazil and West Indies . . . in 1721,' in Astley, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 449-450. John was a sharp political observer and analyst. While he was negotiating with the Dutch, he calculated their strength of a "Bomb-Vessel and two or three Frigates" to be inferior to his force. He knew that confrontation with European traders and assertion of his rights was the best way to preserve his economic position. For example, after this incident with the Dutch "he became very exact with Every Body about what he called his Dues," p. 450.

and who were not willing to see it endangered in any manner. Although he himself did not occupy any position of power in traditional officialdom, he was very influential in Axim politics. He was consulted by both Africans and Europeans in dealings involving each other. He was well known for his taste for conspicuous consumption: a retinue of twenty to thirty men dressed in bright colours for escorting him, receiving and entertaining his guests; a large house with an armory, chamber and well-furnished room for entertaining his guests, some of them European traders friendly to him. Close to this house were two courtyards:

> . . . the outer had Houses for Officers and Servants belonging to him; the inner (a spacious Square) had a Guard-Room and Good Armory fronting the Entrance, with piazzas to accommodate his Guard, and imitate in some Measure the Grandeur of the Prussian Governors.[114]

John also entertained lavishly. Once, when some Englishmen visited him, there was on the table kanki bread, salt, butter, cheese, palm-wine, and beer, served up with clean plates, knives, napkins, &c. His family was also richly dressed. The gold that one of his wives and her child wore "in chains about their Necks, Wrists, Ancles and Legs, with their Drops in their Hair, amounted to eight or ten Pounds Troy weight."[115]

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[114] Ibid.; see also Smith, op. cit., p. 477.

[115] Atkins, op. cit., p. 450.

All along the coast there were men like John Konny. We have John Kabe at Cape Coast, who played one foreign power against another, allying himself with Europeans against Africans and vice-versa to protect his economic position. Early in 1690, Kabe had established as his headquarters a village in Kommenda.[116] Four years later, the Dutch sent miners to a small hill near his house to dig for gold. The hill was dedicated to a local god, and the local people were outraged by its desecration.[117] They urged the Dutch to stop their digging and finally attacked them. When the news got to Elmina, the Dutch governor was infuriated and determined to exact revenge. At first, the Kommendahene falsely blamed the incident on John Kabe. On their way to revenge the attack on the miners, the Dutch soldiers, ignoring Kabe's insistence that he was not to blame, started plundering his property.[118] At this point he had to fight to protect himself. The Dutch lost six of

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[116] Claridge, op. cit., I; pp. 146-48.

[117] It was well known on the coast that the African rulers attempted to control the supply of gold by restricting the mines. Once the king found a certain area was rich in gold mines, he declared that the area was sacred and that under it or near it resided one of the gods who should not be bothered. From then on, the mines were worked by the miners only with the king's consent and after consulting the priests, who acted as mining supervisors for the king. Any other trespassers would be subject to penalty of death.

[118] He met them with a sheep to present to the Dutch governor when they got to his village, Bosman, op. cit., p. 30; see Sir Dalby Thomas' letter in Barbot, op. cit., pp. 437-438.

their countrymen and the battle, leaving the embittered John Kabe to invite the English to Kommenda as his new allies.[119] The coastal accounts are full of false claims that it was the Africans who caused most of the wars against the Europeans. But in this case Bosman clearly blames the provocation on the arrogance of the Dutch general in charge of Elmina:

> What Injury this Neighbourhood hath already done to our Trade, every one knows who is acquainted with this Coast; as also how easily it might have been prevented. But Mr. ____ [the Dutch general] was too Fiery to think Sedately, or hearken to Wise Counsels; and contrary to all Reason, he desires nothing so much as War and the Honour he hoped to get thereby; . . .[120]

The Dutch general evidently hoped to equal or surpass the honor accorded another Dutch governor, Mr. Sweets, who had defeated the Fante earlier in 1687.

The conflict ushered in by this new war between John Kabe and the Dutch soon involved the English and the Fante. The English courted Kabe's help, as his position in coastal politics was clearly prominent--he was very influential by his "credit and power at Commendo."[121] His interests were not to be restricted to dealing with African company merchants, for soon he

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[119] Ibid; John Kabe's former cooperation and trade with the Dutch had been misconstrued by the latter as cowardice, for they did not expect that he would defend his village against the attack.

[120] Bosman, op. cit., p. 31.

[121] Sir Dalby Thomas in Barbot, op. cit., p. 439.

opened up a trade relationship with the English interloper's ships. Kabe was intent on utilizing this new competitive business connection to increase his economic interests on the coast. He constructed a fort to divert trade from Royal African Company at Kommenda; and bought eighteen guns from Captain Gladman and six more from Captain Ingle of Shrewsbury Gallery in 1702 for its defense, as well as "to molest and obstruct as much as possible the Royal African Company's trade in their fort at Commendo."[122]

Apparently John Kabe remained in control of the situation up to 1707 and beyond. In that year, we learn that the Dutch sent out another expedition against him and this one, too, they lost. It is possible that at this time he had reached an understanding with English competitors at Kommenda, who were willing to render a helping hand if necessary.[123] Kabe was well aware of the coastal politics and economic setup. He belonged to that group of Africans who understood favorable and adverse conditions for trade. These men knew when to deal with the Europeans, how to time trade, withholding it until certain conditions were met, when to deal with the companies or the interlopers, and when to call for

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[122] Ibid.

[123] Sir Dalby Thomas, upon hearing of the Dutch expedition against Kabe, sent a precautionary reinforcement from Cape Coast to Kommenda to be at hand in case the Dutch intentions were extended beyond John Kabe's town. Ibid., pp. 439-440.

help from the neighboring states against foreigners.[124]

At about the same time that John Kabe was repelling Dutch designs on his operations, his fellow Africans were engaged in an economic power struggle with the Danes in Accra. Their leader was Assameni, a "Black general, who had surprized and seized the Danes fort here, forced the Danes general to fly to the Dutch to save his life, murdered his second and several of the soldiers, and now trades with the interlopers, and supplies them with water and other necessaries, which they can get no where else, except the islands of St. Thomas and Princes."[125] Accra was one of the busiest trading markets on the Ghana coast, and this obviously led local Africans like Assameni to devise means to acquire control of such trade. Assameni's plan was to go to the castle, ostensibly to trade, but with weapons concealed in his people's clothes. At a given signal they all drew their weapons and secured the castle with minimum resistance.[126]

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[124]For example, soon after the battle over the hill mines, the Dutch wanted to hire other states to revenge their defeat, but the Kommenda people (there is every reason to believe Kabe's influence was involved) sent messengers to Fante and Sabou asking them to join Kommenda in conquering the invading Dutch. The Fante were made to understand that if the Dutch conquered Kommenda, the Fante and Sabou would be next. The Fante joined their brethren, and in the ensuing battle the Dutch lost. Bosman, op. cit., p. 32.

[125]Thomas Phillips, op. cit., p. 227.

[126]Ibid., pp. 227-228; see also John Bloome's account of this takeover in Barbot, op. cit., p. 448.

Thomas Phillips, who personally met and was invited to dine with this Black general in May 1694, has left us a first-hand account of him. Assameni sent hammocks for his three European guests--Mr. Phillips, Mr. Bloome, and Mr. Buckeridge. When they arrived at the castle gate, the guard asked them to surrender their swords; they then went to the dining room, where they were offered brandy and given the traditional salute to important guests, which consisted of discharging all guns in the fort. At the dinner, Assameni's blend of European and African styles showed how things had changed: "Over 200 vollies of cannon were fired during their visit. He had also a new flag indicative of the African control, white cloth on which was painted an African in the center brandishing a sword."[127] On the following day, a Danish expedition arrived at Accra to retake the castle from the Black general. However, when the latter assessed the Danish strength, he made "exorbitant" demands which the Danes, short of sufficient decisive power, agreed to pay before the castle was returned. The document of the conditions which the Danes accepted bid them ". . . to quit all pretensions of preparations or satisfaction, from the Black general and his accomplices, for seizing the castle, and for the merchandize and 50 marks of gold that were in it at the time of seizure, and pay down 50 marks of gold more upon

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[127]Phillips, op. cit., p. 228.

delivery of castle; all which they performed . . ."[128]

John Konny, John Kabe, Assameni and their colleagues on the coast had several advantages on their side. First, in their youth they had all served the Europeans on the fort, and had learned a lot about trade and the methods the foreigners used in competing with Africans. Second, they saw at close quarters the prevailing hostilities between various European powers--hence they could assess the Europeans' strengths and weaknesses. Third, they were well aware of the profit that the Europeans or middlemen made from this trade. Barbot estimates that the annual value of gold from Ghana ranged from 8000 to 12,0000 marks or, at £30 per mark, about £240,000 to £360,000.[129] Of this, the Dutch and English controlled forty-five percent, and the rest was shared among the Danes, Brandenburgers, Portuguese, French and interlopers. The Europeans expected a forty-five percent net profit.[130] Fourth, as Africans they also had connections with the men who were influential locally. They knew that these local men derived a considerable profit from trade with the Europeans. Barbot writes that the goods sold to the ship or from the ship were subject to a duty tax ranging from three to twenty percent, payable to the kings of the

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[128] Ibid.

[129] Barbot, op. cit., p. 228.

[130] Ibid., p. 274.

towns where the markets were located. Further inland there was a duty of a shilling per head when people passed through one country on their way to the market.[131] Thus, through their connections they could start their own towns, as Kabe did, or control an entire area, as John Konny, or take over a whole castle. Fifth, they used their influence as middlemen with Europeans to advance the interests of their allies, thus becoming, in effect, economic or power brokers.

In all five capacities, they contributed heavily to the stability or instability of politics and trade, as we see from the example of one Edward Barter at Cape Coast, "who hath a greater Power on the Coast, than all three English Agents together (in whom the Chief Command of the coast is vested jointly); who, by Reason of their short stay here, are so little acquainted with the Affair of this Coast, that they suffer themselves to be guided by him, who very well knows how to make Advantage of them."[132] Like his colleagues, Barter did not hesitate to use force to protect or further his interests:

> He is become so considerable that he can raise a large number of Armed Men; some whereof are his own Slaves, and the rest Free-Men, that adhere to him: so that his Interest is at present so great that he is very much respected, honoured and served by

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[131] Ibid., pp. 274-275.

[132] Ibid

> the Principal People about him; and whoever designs to Trade with the English must stand well with him before he can succeed.[133]

Barter had his own small fort and knew how to read and write--an ability he must have used to enhance his value among his fellow Africans as a contact with Europeans.

The men who controlled the trade and the markets effectively could gain the revenue necessary to grow rich, found new states or expand existing ones. We have seen that in some places along the coast the trade yielded the monarch as much as twenty percent of the total amount of goods sold in his kingdom. Sometimes these sources were not sufficient. One monarch who was a skillful arbitrator gained revenue when he helped two rulers settle trade or political disputes. He was also paid whenever a neighboring king hired some of his men, as mercenaries, to fight another neighbor over the markets. Such services contributed most to the king's revenues:

> 'Tis upon these incomes that they chiefly subsist, for their Revenue is very inconsiderable. 'Tis indeed true that they impose a Toll on all Goods passing through their country; but the collectors being always some of the Principal Men amongst them, make sure of the largest share of it, and collect so well that the king has very little of it.[134]

This problem was not localized in Gold Coast alone but existed as far away as Whida.[135]

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[133]Bosman, op. cit.

[134]Ibid., pp. 191-92.

[135]There we learn that the tax collectors too did not give all of it to the king. Sometimes the

Besides the regular markets, fairs were held all over the country once or twice a week.[136] These fairs were found deep inland, where the coastal merchants took their merchandise or the local merchants sold goods they had imported from the coast. The control of the markets and fairs had an even greater effect inland than on the coast. Inland there were no Europeans who interrupted political order by supporting one monarch against another. The absence of the Europeans as a political-economic factor left the Africans very much on their own. This freedom, plus the increased volume of trade which the Asante eventually controlled, were the most decisive elements in the development of the Asante empire after the fall of Denkyera.

As this empire developed, its institutions became much more complex than those found in the coastal states. When the Asante started expanding, they already had the same basic institutions as their coastal counterparts. They initiated no radical revolution, rather improving what was already present on the coast. It is this slow evolution of their institutions that concerns us next.

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high-ranking officials exchanged their slaves for European goods at night to avoid paying duty. William Snelgrave, 'A New Account of Some Parts of Guinea in 1730,' in Astley, op. cit., pp. 485-508.

[136]Phillips observes the same custom among the Whida people where there was "a great congress of men, women and children" who came to sell locally produced goods and good as well as buying imports in Astley, 'Abstract' op. cit., p. 238.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL AND FAMILY ORIGINS OF ADMINISTRATORS

Among the reasons cited by writers for the development of the Asante one looks in vain for any mention of marital relationships. In fact, so far this aspect has been totally ignored.[1] The author here intends to hypothesize that the Asante development was partly due to marital relationships which created strong kinship bonds with sufficient cohesiveness to further and protect diverse and sometimes conflicting kinship interests.

As early as mid-seventeenth century we have traditions about the relationship between ancestresses of one town and another. Often this relationship goes along with kinship ties, either affinal, consaguinal or both.[2] It is this relationship that determined the

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[1]European writers believed that the major reason for this expansion was the slave trade or militarism. See, for example, the cited works of Claridge, Rattray, and B. Cruckshank, Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast of Africa, 2nd edition, London: Frank Cass, 1966. Recently, however, other writers, particularly Ivor Wilks, have attributed Asante development to Islamic influences from the north, or strong monarchy aided by centralized bureaucracy. I. Wilks, 'The Aspects of Bureaucratization in Ashanti in the nineteenth century,' J.A.H., VII (1966), 2:215-232.

[2]This will be made clear in the later chapters

type of assistance that one group could give another, and what one group could expect from its neighbor. It was this relationship that determined the political status of various towns as well as external and internal political alignments. For example, according to a Mampong tradition, Okomfo Anokye decided that if the newly formed Asante union was to conquer the Denkyerahene, it was imperative that the Mamponghene be the overall commander of the Asante army.[3] Apart from Okomfo Anokye's inspiration from Nyame,[4] when one examines the Mampong genealogy one finds that Opoku Ware I married Dwabena, the sister of Mamponghene Boahen Anantuo.[5] It is

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when we give the detailed genealogies of various towns, ruling houses, local inter-stool marriages and inter-Amantuo marriages. Whereas the previous authors have recognized the role of kinship in Asante history, this aspect has not been emphasized. See for example Arhin's important article on "The Structure of Greater Ashanti," op. cit., p. 79 and Rattray, Ashanti Law, op. cit., Chapter VIII.

[3]Rattray, op. cit., p. 236.

[4]Okomfo Anokye was the supreme lawgiver of Asante. He has been characterized by Sir Francis Fuller, Asante Administrator for over fifteen years, as the "Cardinal Wolsey" of Asante. Whatever he did was accepted by the Asante because it was legitimately transmitted to him by God. One might go further than Sir Francis and equate Okomfo Anokye with a Moses coming down from the mountain and telling the Israelites that God had given him the Ten Commandments, or a Mohammed coming from the cave with the Koran and claiming that it consisted of Allah's words verbatim.

[5]See Chart 67 & 68 in Rattray, op. cit., opp. p. 254. Rattray's Ashanti Law is indispensable for any historical work that requires a close analysis and interpretation of the Amantuo history based on oral tradition. The traditions collected by the author in Kumasi and Mampong did not show much discrepancy with

possible that Opoku Ware had inherited Dwabena because according to a Mampong tradition Boahen Anantuo gave his sister to Osei Tutu before the Denkyera campaign. This tradition is also confirmed by Jamasi tradition.[6] Hence one could confidently say that Mamponghene B. Anantuo was not chosen as overall commander of Asante army without kinship considerations.

Administrators and Kinship Ties at the Time of Union

This will be even better understood if we look into the kinship composition of the other major Amantuo participating in the Denkyera campaign. Before the war Osei Tutu had defeated his strongest opponents at Kumasi (Tafohene) and Domakwaa) and either subjugated them (Tafo) or driven them away from Kumasi (Domakwaa). A few years before fighting the latter groups, he had allied himself with the other potential opponents, the Amakom people, through the marriage of his sister Yaako Kesiamoa to the Amakomhene.[7] At Tafo Osei Tutu was

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what Rattray was told more than forty years ago. For this reason the writer feels that he can confidently use the traditions collected by Rattray for the other Amantuo besides Kumasi and Mampong. Of particular significance in this chapter will be the genealogical charts in that book. No one so far has attempted a historical analysis these charts. Supplemented by the writer's field research, Asante stool histories and other sources some interesting interpretations can be made.

[6]Information provided by Mamponghemaa and her aunt, Mamponghene stool historians and Jamasihene.

[7]Tradition provided by Amakomhene and Asantehemaa.

content to replace the defeated ruler with his brother. All these people who did not belong to Osei Tutu's clan (Oyoko) were, together with the Mampong people, to form the advance guard and the main body of the army fighting just ahead of the king. Although both the Amakomhene and Mamponghene were Osei Tutu's in-laws, it seems probable that the reason he did not trust the command of the army to the Amakomhene was because he suspected the latter might unite with his long-time Kumasi neighbors, the Tafo people, who had recently been defeated by Osei Tutu. So the Tafo people were given the brunt of the campaign as the advance guard.[7a] Next to the advance guard came the main body under the Mamponghene Omantuo. Besides the Mampong and Amakom people, the main body included the Adonten people. The Adontenhene, who was militarily the most logical person to command this body, was not chosen, most probably because he was not related to Osei Tutu either consanguinally or by marriage. According to Adonten tradition, the Adonten people, shortly before the Denkyera war, faithfully fought with Osei Tutu against the Domaa people at Suntresu and defeated them. At that time it was the Adontehene Nana Aduonim Pim who was the commander of

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[7a]See Fuller, op. cit., p. 14 for the chart indicating the organization of the Asante army. The Akwansrafo are the scouts and an intelligence arm of the army. According to information from Nana Owusu Ansah during the peace time the Akwansrafo chose the spies to live or trade in different parts of empire and to report any political developments there.

the main body.[8]

Behind the main body came the rear-guard commanded by Osei Tutu and consisting solely of the Oyoko kings: Bekwai, Kokofu and Nsuta. There were several advantages for Osei Tutu in having fellow Oyoko kings near him. First, the Kokofuhene was his nephew, who was bound to him not only by political allegiance between the Asantehene and Omanhene but also as a kinsman. Second, Nsuta and Bekwai were much smaller than the other states in the union. Third, these two states, as well as Juaben, also owed more than political allegiance to the Asantehene, then Kumasihene, who was their senior and was referred to, as he is even today, as "uncle."[9] Fifth, the Nsutahene, Oduru Panyin, who was with Osei Tutu at the time of the battle of Feyiase, was married to the sister of Adontenhene. Oduru Panyin, before becoming the Nsutahene, was Osei Tutu's Okyeame.[10] It is possible that he advised Osei

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[8]Adontenhene Stool history, IAS/AS 95. Tradition also cross-checked by the writer with Adontenhene Nana Agyeman Nkwantabisa III and his elders.

[9]Bekwai's position in the Denkyera campaign is not clear. Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 219 places Bekwai, together with Nsuta and Kokofu in, the rear guard under the direct command of Asantehene. But in the chapter on the history and constitution of Bekwai tradition indicated that they "fought in the right wing under Nifahene," p. 158. This is probably correct, because Sir Francis Fuller, whose book came out eight years earlier than Rattray's, collected traditions indicating Bekwai's position on the right wing, ibid., p. 14.

[10]Ibid., p. 259.

Tutu as well as acting as a trusted liaison between him and his brother-in-law, the Adontehene. Aduru Panyin was also married to a royal female from the house of Agona, Okomfo Anokye's town. His sons became kings of both the Adonten and Agona stools, thereby introducing a special affinal relationship which still appears today in Agonahene and Adontenhene's reference to Nsutahene as Agya 'father.'

Osei Tutu was wise enough not to give all Oyoko clan kings soft positions in the army. On the right wing were the Ejisu, Offinsu and Juabenhene in command of this division. The last two were among the six Amantuo in the Asante Union.[11] Offinsu also had ties with Oyoko clan through her rulers, who belonged to the same family as the Mampong rulers--Beretuo.[12] Furthermore, Nsutahene Agyin Frimpong, Osei Tutu's contemporary, had married a Beretuo royal of Offinsu. She bore him a son who later became Offinsuhene, either during Osei Tutu's lifetime or during Opoku Ware's reign.[13]

The left wing of the army was entrusted to Asumegyahene Anomaya Apao, of the Aduana clan, who was connected with the Kumasi Oyoko by a myth or origin which traced both clans to a cave in Asantemanso in the Asumegya region. Asumegya occupied a very special

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[11]The other four were Asumegya, Kumawu, Mampong and Kumasi, Ibid., p. 73.

[12]Ibid. [13]Ibid., pp. 257-258.

position in Asante politics because Asantemanso was located in her territory. This Omantuo was considered "sacred to every Ashanti as containing the sacred grove at Santemanso."[14] In the olden days, the Asantehene sent gifts and sacrifices for the Asantemanso shrine and for its caretaker. Before the Denkyera war, the Asantehene's promise to the Asumegya people in exchange for their participation can be interpreted along kinship lines. The prevailing custom gave the Asantehene right to claim as his subjects any children begotten on Asumegya women by Asantehene's Nhenkwa 'servants.' He forfeited this right in return for their participation.[15] Although we have no specific names, information from other stool histories indicates that this tie must have been fairly strong.[16] Since forfeiture of this right did not mean that such marriages could not take place, we can confidently assume that marriages between Kumasi and Asumegya continued, especially between those families in which ayete relationship had been established when the Denkyera campaign occurred.[17] Nor can we overlook the fact that at Kumasi there were Asumegya people already in the service of the Asantehene

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[14] Ibid., p. 131, fn. 1. [15] Ibid., p. 132.

[16] This is true in the areas where we have enough oral history, such as Kumasi and Mampong.

[17] For example, Kwame Dwekyei, who succeeded Owusu Ansa as Asumegyahene, was the son of Kokofuhene Ofe and Asumegyahemaa Nana Safowa, Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 134 and Fig. 22.

through marriage, and that these people were interested in continuing their kinship ties.

Asumegyahene shared the left wing command with fellow clansman Kumawuhene Kobina Kodie. Kumawu people had been Oyoko allies in many battles, of which the most important were against Kwawu and Domaa. In the former they were joined by Juaben Oyoko, while in the latter they were allied with Kumasi Oyoko led by Obiri Yeboa. This was the battle in which Domaahene Kusi was killed and his people completely routed from Suntreso, a short distance northwest of Kumasi. He was assigned to the left wing because of his trustworthiness, his proven bravery and his kinship ties with the Oyoko's origins at Asantemanso caves. After his brave contribution to the defeat of Ntim Gyakari, he, Mamponghene and Kumasi Adontenhene were "privileged to stand upon their sandals instead of being unshod when in the presence of the king."[18] Besides Kumawu, Agogo, which was also of the Aduana clan, participated in the Denkyera war. These people's connection with Okyoko was that Agogohene had married a Nsutahene royal, and their son Oduru Panyin was the Nsutahene who fought side by

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[18]Okomfo Anokye implemented two inspirations that he received from Nyame in connection with the pending campaign: that Mamponghene should be the commander-in-chief of the entire army, that one of the Omanhene should drink a special medicine which would kill him during the campaign but eventually ensure Asante victory. Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 219.

side with Osei Tutu.[19] Nsutahene Agyei Frimpon, probably a contemporary of Osei Tutu, married Kumawu queen mother Saa Dontwi. This union apparently strengthened the web of kinship between the Oyoko and Aduana clans and furthered their political, economic and military interests.[20]

Thus from the above analysis it is clear that those involved in the Denkyera campaign were related either as affines or as kinsmen. The exception were Tafo, which was a conquered state, and Ejisu of Asona clan whose relationship and place of origin was different from that of the other groups. According to Ejisu traditions, "it was an elephant that brought the Asona tribe from the ground into the world at a place called

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[19] Ibid., pp. 258-259.

[20] See Fig. 50 in ibid., opp. p. 234. However, we need to be cautious in accepting this marriage. In comparing the chart with the descriptive section we note that, first, Agyei Frimpon's successor was Kobina Asimadu, who was succeeded by Kwame Kyere, the brother of Saa Dontwi. Kwame Kyere was a contemporary of Opoku Ware, probably in the latter part of his reign in the latter part of his reign in the 1740's. If the marriage did take place, Saa Dontwi was married at a very young age to an old man late in Osei Tutu's period. Second, if Saa Dontwi is only two generations removed from Okosua Ade, who was married to Asantehene Kwaku Dua I (1834-1867), then it does not seem probably that she was of marriageable age early in the 1740's, especially since, according to tradition, Kwaku Dua was young when he was enstooled. (Tradition from Nana Owusu Ansah.) However, if Saa Dontwi is four generations removed from Yaa Mansa, who was married to Asantehene Osei Yao (1824-1834), then it is possible that she was married to Agyei Frimpon. Another explanation may be that there was another Nsutahene by the same name who was destooled and his name suppressed--a common custom in Asante.

Adaboye, which is commonly known as Abuakwa" in Akim.[21] Their important connection with the Denkyera campaign was that Ejisuhene Dako Pim volunteered to be sacrificed in battle in order to save the lives of his fellow Asante and achieve victory, as had been prophesied by Okomfo Anokye. Further, his placement on the left wing together with Juaben and Offinsu was partially due to the "one thousand guns under him in the field."[22] That number is significant when one considers that Bekwai state had only thirty guns.[23] For the other Amantuo, what was at stake was worth their maximum effort. It was not a battle that any Amantuo could look upon without being awed at the possible consequences of losing it. There is no doubt that the Oyoko Amantuo, particularly Bekwai, Kokofu and Kumasi, which would have taken the brunt of the attack at Denkyera, would have suffered most. But how could Nsuta and Juaben, who were farther away, have seen their clansmen suffer so much and not been fully aware that they would be next? How could Kumawu Aduana stand by while their Asumegya brothers were sustaining the initial losses

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[21]Ejisu Stool history, IAS/AS 11, p. 2. The Ejisu royal branch, which lives twelve miles east of Kumasi and whose revolutionary queen mother, Yaa Asantewaa led the abortive Asante revolt in 1900, were a branch of the Asona royal house that ruled Akim Abuakwa, probably in the mid-seventeenth century. Their migrations were probably due to the rise of Akwamu state at that time.

[22]Ibid. [23]Ibid., p. 148.

together with Bekwai and Kokofu? The Beretuo Amantuo of Offinsu and Mampong were wise enough to realize that to allow their in-laws and neighbors to fall without offering any help was a violation of the honor code.[24] This campaign, then, assumed an unexpected kinship ideology where the collapse of one Omantuo was equivalent to the collapse of any other. The underlying ideology was similar to that of an extended family with the members' obligations, expectations, and duties governed by predetermined kinship rules.[25]

Even Okomfo Anokye's marriage and kinship ties indicate a striking similarity to the rest of the Amantuo kinship during this war. To legitimize his kinship ties with his political counterpart, Osei Tutu, we are told that one of his ancestors, Twumasi Amponsem, was the brother of Owusu Panyin, Osei Tutu's father.[26]

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[24]In old Asante, when a person was faced with choice between losing his life or his honor, he chose the former. Asante traditions are full of accounts of individuals who committed suicide in battle rather than face the disgrace associated with defeat or with breaking an oath. Nowadays, though, this custom is not followed so rigorously. The author knows of a queen mother who threatened to commit suicide if a candidate of her choice was not enstooled by the elders. But when the elders refused to be blackmailed into accepting her mediocre candidate and enstooled their candidate instead, the queen mother refrained from taking her life.

[25]Rattray deals with these aspects very well in Chs. I-VIII, Ashanti Law, pp. 1-71.

[26]According to tradition collected by Rattray, it is not clear how Okomfo Anokye was related to Osei Tutu. An attempt to make a genealogical chart from information provided in Ibid., p. 271, reveals this. But it is probable that Rattray accidentally left out a

Okomfo Anokye's clan members also founded other important stools which played a role in the Denkyera war: the Adontenhene of Kumasi, and the Amakomhene and Antoahene. It was the Antoahene Sakodie Date who went to get Osei Tutu in Akwamu so that he could take over Obiri Yeboa's position.[27] Sakodie Date was also the king of Agona Akyim, Okomfo Anokye's town.[28] Hence there are both kinship and political connections between Sakodie Date and Okomfo Anokye. Therefore we may assume that Osei Tutu had every reason to trust Okomfo Anokye as a political confidant whose family was actively interested in seeing Osei Tutu lead the Asante in this difficult time. According to tradition, after the death of Obiri Yeboa, two possible candidates for his position turned it down, Nana Amoagyami of Kokofu and Nana Kwaku Duabodie.[29] Then Nana Adu Gyamfi agreed to act as a regent while Sakodie Date went to get Barema Osei Kofi, as Osei Tutu was called at that time.

Okomfo Anokye's political-religious relationship

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name linking Dwirawiri Kwa, Nana Dufie Gyampontima and Adu Twumuwu, for he acknowledges the relationship between Osei and Okomfo in a footnote on the same page: "Komfo Anotche and the great Osei Tutu were thus related; an interesting and hitherto unrecorded fact in Ashanti history."

[27] IAS/AS 34.

[28] Rattray, Ashanti Law, Ch. XXIV.

[29] Rattray, Ibid., Ch. XXIV.

with the head of Kumasi Oyoko was not entirely new in his family. His brother, Yamoa, who was also an Okomfo (priest), was the advisor of Obiri Yeboa with whom he died during the Domaa campaign.[30] Although it is not clear whether Yamoa was Obiri Yeboa's only Okomfo,[31] we could assume that his position was significant in Kumasi politics, since his name persists in tradition and we have the name of no other Okomfo at the time. We also know that one of Yamoa's predecessors, Dampte, was an Okomfo in Adanse. He is probably the person who passed the profession down to them. Thus Okomfo Anokye, by becoming Osei Tutu's new political-religious confidant, was essentially inheriting his elder brother's position in the Asante political clan system. It is very unlikely that Yamoa and Obiri Yeboa had discussed both Okomfo Anokye and Osei Tutu as their respective Abadiakyire ('heirs apparent').[32] Yet we should not

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[30] Ibid., p. 271.

[31] In Asante it was and still is not unusual for a king to consult more than one Okomfo in matters of importance. This was done fairly often in the olden days; sometimes kramo 'Muslims' were consulted. Tradition provided by Nsumakwahene stool historian. While Bowdich was visiting he observed that the Asante people had great confidence in charms and amulets which they purchased "extravagantly from the Moors, believing firmly that they make them invulnerable and invincible in war, paralyze the band of the enemy, shiver their weapons, divert the course of balls, render both sexes prolific, and avert all evils but sickness and natural death," op. cit., pp. 222-23.

[32] Although Asante traditional custom is that the elders representing the people and the queenmother on behalf of the royal lineage elect the stool successors,

overlook an important point in Okomfo Anokye's succession to his brother's position in Kumasi. The Kumasi elders demanded proof of Anokye's ability for the office he was going to take. Before his brother fell in battle with Obiri Yeboa and many Kumasi soldiers, he had prophesied that Kumasi would conquer Domaa, and the prophecy turned out false. The elders wanted a concrete proof that Anokye had the power to prophecy accurately, and if he failed to legitimize his performance thus, they could look for another priest. Anokye gave the proof and the position was given to him.[33]

Okomfo Anokye also contracted important marriages before the Denkyera war. The first war following his accession to office was fought against Domaahene Kyereme Sikafo, who was defeated by Osei Tutu and his forces. Kyereme's successor, Domaahene Kusi, rebelled against Osei Tutu. Another campaign was waged and Kusi was defeated. In the meantime Okomfo Anokye had married Kusi's two sisters, Afuwa and Asiedua,[34] in an attempt

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it is also an accepted tradition (though much less common nowadays) that a stool occupant nominate a potential successor from his lineage. Often his choice was considered seriously, and it was rarely ignored except in very serious cases. See also Adontenhene Stool History IAS/AS 95; Antoa Stool History IAS/AS 34.

[33]He told one of Osei Tutu's confidants, Amankwatia, to go to a certain place where he would find a leopard and bring it back to Osei Tutu, leading it by its left paw, who was to cut off its head. (Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 273.)

[34]Ibid., pp. 274-275.

to integrate the Domaa royal family with his own by instituting an ayete relationship, which was an important aspect of the Asante kinship system.

Post Feyiase Administrators Kinship Ties

The kinship ties that had so successfully integrated the Asante during the Denkyera campaign formed the basis for the Asante expansion. This mutual dependence was continued through the difficult days of intense wars waged by Osei Tutu and Opoku Ware after the Denkyera war. By the middle of the eighteenth century there were two or three people occupying stools who could claim that their fathers were occupying or had occupied other stools in the same town or oman 'state,' or elsewhere in Asante. At the same time, new marriage relationships had been established since the Asante union between local ruling families within one Amantuo or within the Asante nation. It was now no longer unusual for a king to be a member of the royal blood of two houses ruling different stools. For examble, Asantehene Opoku Ware, on succeeding to the Golden Stool, was a prince both of the Oyoko clan and of the clan occupying the Amakom stool.[35] At this time Opoku Ware married Dwabena, a Mampong royal, on whom he

[35]Amakom stool history IAS/AS 77. The reader should keep in mind that though Opoku Ware was a prince of the two ruling houses, the matrilineal descent pattern dictated that he could only occupy the stool belonging to his mother's lineage.

begot Nyako Akosua who married Kokofuhene Apia Agyei.[36] Such a marriage not only strengthened the blood ties between the Kumasi and Kokofu rulers, but also entrenched Mampong's kinship web with both lineages. This was particularly significant for three reasons. First, Kumasi Oyoko could ask Mampong for a bride thereafter, and Mampong knew that the Asantehene was obliged to take such a daughter as a part of ayete mutual expectation. Second, Kokofu, having established the same relationship, was now under the same mutual obligations. Third, future rulers of Mampong would most likely be either sons or grandsons of these two rulers.[37]

Kumawuhene Kwame Kyere, Opoku Ware's contemporary, provides another example of this complex web of kinship. He himself was a royal of Kumawu stool as well as of Feyiase (a town located where Ntim Gyakari had been decisively defeated)--a stool where his father was Ohene. He married a Juaben royal, Ajabe Foe, who eventually became Ohemaa 'queen mother' of that state. From this union were born Akuamoa Panyin (also known as Akuamoa Kobina) and four daughters. Akuamoa became Juabenhene, while two of his sisters became queen mothers of Juaben. It is from one of these sisters,

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[36]Rattray, Ashanti Law, Fig. 67. Opoku Ware might have inherited this bride from Osei Tutu.

[37]The case of Mampong is rather different because we have four Beretuo lineages which supplied candidates for the Omanhene. But in other Amantuo, where the rulers come from the same family, this difficulty was not encountered.

Ako, that the present Juabenhene and Juabenhemaa are descended.[38] As a result of this union, the Kumawuhene earned the title of Agya, which the Juaben members of the royal lineage use to refer to him. This marriage, like those of Opoku Ware and Apia Agyei, joined two clans together--Juaben Oyoko and Kumawu Aduana. Kumawu Aduana was joined with Juaben through Nsuta Oyoko as well as through the marriage of Kwame Kyere's sister to Nsutahene. One child, Gyama Akosua, was born of this union, from whom one of the two ruling lineages of Kumawu is descended.[39] She also became the queenmother of Kumawu.

The Aduana and Oyoko were also connected by the marriage of Kokofuhene Osei Akwasi and a royal of the Asumegya Aduana clan, Nana Safowa. She eventually became the Asumegyahemaa. Their son, Kwame Dwekyei, became Asumegyahene, while their two daughters, Denta Bima and Firima Panyin, are ancestresses of two different royal lineages that provide candidates for the stool. The third lineage comes from Akua Amoakowa, who was Safowa's sister.[40] At that time two of Kokofuhene's brothers-in-law (Gyebi Kofi Panyin and Gyebi Kumaa) occupied the Asumegya stool and accompanied either Osei or Opoku Ware in various campaigns.

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[38]Rattray, Ashanti Law, Fig. 31 opposite p. 196.

[39]Ibid., Fig. 50, opposite p. 234.

[40]Ibid., Fig. 22.

With marriages and Asante unification came the expectation that the Asantehene would interfere in the internal affairs of any Omantuo. Opoku Ware interfered in Asumegya political affairs partly to save Asumegya-hene Byebi Kofi, Kokofuhene's brother-in-law, whom the elders wished to destool. Instead of destooling him outright, they decided to execute him by locking him in odan mum (a small house without windows).[41] Word, however, reached Kumasi; Opoku Ware had him released, and those responsible were tried and executed. Gyebi Kofi's younger brother, who succeeded him on the stool, was uncultivated. Once he got into a bitter argument with his sister Safowa over a cloth, and the latter slapped him, calling him a fool.[42] In retaliation he destroyed the crown property, some of which belonged to her. Under normal circumstances such an offense was punished by destoolment and banishment. But Gyebi Kumaa had powerful supporters in his "brother-in-law" Asantehene and his real brother-in-law, the Kokofuhene. So, however abominable his action was, the Asumegya Mpanyimfuo could not raise a finger; they were "afraid to protest because of the events in the previous reign."[43] The Asante kinship system had its own

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[41]This was done to the members of the royal blood whose blood could not be spilled through the regular method of execution--decapitation.

[42]The term kwasea 'fool' is very insulting in Asante.

[43]Rattray, Law, p. 133.

advantages in confronting external foes, but it also had several shortcomings, and this appears to have been one of the most serious. This was one time that the local voice of the people was repressed, their right to choose their ruler was seriously abridged, if not entirely lost, and the politics of Amantuo mutual help was temporarily replaced by the politics of fraternization. This episode is also important as indicating the paradox of the unified Asante nation which was never unified. The sense of unity lay in the kin and affinal relationships. Yet the same relationships were the basis of disunity when local factors accentuated the prevailing differences underlying group interests.

This paradox continued through the post-Opoku Ware years. The Asante empire underwent a period of power consolidation in the conquered areas. It also continued its conquests, which were temporarily halted by its setback at Akantamansu in 1826.[44] One of the

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[44]The battle of Akantamansu was an important setback for Asante whose policy since 1807 was to keep all the coastal tribes under her control. In 1824, the Asante had killed Charles Macarthy, the British administrator for the Gold Coast. Though the British government was not anxious to continue its presence of the coast, there was still a feeling among the policy makers that this would be a bad time to leave. Instead, the official feeling was that the Asante threat to the coastal residents and European merchants should be stopped, as Metcalfe observed, ". . . The Secretary of State, though very unwilling to wash his hands of Gold Coast affairs, felt that he could not conscientiously do so until he had first done what he could to bring about peace on the coast; so that the British merchants who elected to stay there after the Government establishments had been withdrawn, should be in no undue peril." G. E. Metcalfe, Maclean of the Gold Coast,

most significant means of consolidating Asante power was further intra- and extra-Amantuo marriages within Asante proper. There were also marriages between Amantuo individuals and the ruling houses of the tributary states that had either been conquered by Asante or voluntarily submitted to Asante rule. A case in point is the royal of Gyaman stool, who was brought back to Kumasi during the time of Osei Bonsu. He begot Prince Owusu Ansah, who, together with his brother and son, rendered valuable diplomatic service to the Asante nation in the nineteenth century.[45]

The Asantehene's family, instead of getting their brides from Mampong, started marrying the sisters and maternal nieces of the Golden stool. The kinship relationship that followed was very strong, and the political consequences in Asante nation were considerable. This leads us to one of the most interesting aspects of Asante history. Mamponghene Atakora Panyin married Yaa Abrefi, who according to tradition was the only remaining descendant of Osei Tutu's line, but it was not long before he became blind, for which reason he

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London: Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 43.

[45]Owusu Ansah and another Prince, Owusu Nkwabisa, were given to the British as security of the Asante goodwill following the battle of Akantamansu. It was also agreed that they should be sent to England for their education. Owusu Ansah was therefore the first Asante to attend Eton College. Nana Owusu Ansah, Ibid., p. 88.

abdicated the stool.[46] His successor, Asunogyima Penemo took over the reins of government as well as the stool wives, including Yaa Abrefi.[47] By her new husband Yaa Abrefi bore her only child, Konadu Yiadom, a daughter who eventually married her father's nephew Safo Kantanka, the Mamponghene. Yaa Abrefi became Asantehemaa ('Asante queen mother'), and when she died her daughter succeeded her.

These marriages were a classic example of political and family detente in Asante. They had several results. First, since the Asantehemaa's position was very important in Asante politics, it was natural that in matters of major policy decisions she would lend an attentive ear to her husband. Second, the latter was not a mere husband but the Mamponghene--second only to the Asantehene in power. The Mamponghene's advice

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[46]In Asante one of the laws that Okomfo Anokye promulgated was that no blind king could continue on his stool. One Asantehene, Kusi Boadum abdicated for this reason.

[47]The king in Asante was obliged to support the wives of his predecessor, to marry other wives from ayete families, and to see to it that those wives of child-bearing age bore children. The main reason for this obligation was that the wives whose husbands had died in office were still attached to that husband through his ghost, which was offered libations on Adae ceremonies. When they had children by their "levirate" husbands, the children were still considered to belong to the deceased king, since it was through the ghost that their wives had conceived. This custom was extended to include stool wives as those belonging to both the deceased and destooled king. Furthermore, the ayete families marry their daughters to the stool, not to the individual, who is considered accidental. Thus it would be improper for such individuals to take their wives with them in the event of destoolment.

was valued, especially when he was also the Asantehene's son-in-law. Third, national policies could be identified, even more closely with the Mampong policies. Fourth, the opposite could also be true, especially when Mampong expected opposition from the other Amantuo. Fifth, the main connection between these two Amantuo, together with their ties with other Amantuo, was sufficiently strong for them to exert decisive influence on any other Omantuo which might have contemplated opposition.

When Asunogyima Penemo died, a rather embarrassing situation arose, due to one of the ayete rules. Safo Kantanka inherited Yaa Abrefi, who was not only his uncle's wife but also his mother-in-law. Meanwhile, he had begotten six children on Konadu Yiadom. All the sons became Asantehene in succession; Osei Kwame, 1777-1801; Opoku Fofie, 1801; Osei Bonsu, 1801-1824; Osei Yaw Akoto, 1824-1834. The two daughters became Asantehemaa successively, Ama Sewaa becoming the the great-grandmother of the three lineages which supply the candidates for the Asante kings and queens. The above marriage suggests that in the early years of Safo Kantanka's rule, the troika of political advice, consultation and cooperation in the upper hierarchies of Asante strata consisted of mother-in-law-wife,[48] son-

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[48]This is not a very common term even in complex "kinship algebra," but it is the only one the author finds appropriate to describe Yaa Abrefi's position when

in-law-husband and brother-in-law Osei Kwadwo, the Asantehene 1764-1777. In the later years, the troika positions had become: wife, husband, and son (i.e., Asantehemaa Konadu Yiadom, Mamponghene Safo Kantanka, and any of their sons who was the Asantehene).[49]

Safo Kantanka was a remarkable monarch. He was the only Omanhene in all Asante's history who married five queen mothers in his lifetime: Yaa Abrefi, his uncle's wife and Asantehemaa; Konadu Yiadom, later the Asantehemaa; Akwawe Kokomo, Nsutahemaa; Dwentiwa, Kumawuhemaa; and Pankyie, Juabenhemaa.[50] The last three marriages obviously gave him substantial influence in the Amantuo where his wives came from, not only with his traditional Oyoko friends in Kumasi but also with those in Juaben and Nsuta as well as with the Aduana clan in Kumawu.

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she became both mother-in-law and wife of Safo Kantanka.

[49]The factual information in this section is based on oral traditions supplied by Asantehemaa, Mamponghemaa, Nana Owusu Ansah, Mampong stool historians, Rattray, Ashanti Law, Ch. XXII. Dates of the Asantehene are based on Priestley and Wilks, op. cit., p. 96.

[50]Ibid., p. 238. But in Fig. 50 Rattray shows only one marriage of Saa Dontwi to Nsutahene Ajen Frimpon. This is probably the same person as Dwentiwaa. If this is a correct assumption, then her marriage to Mamponghene was either the first or the second, which is rather unusual in view of ayete rules. Rattray does not show Paakyie on the genealogy of chiefs and queen mothers of Juaben on Fig. 31. Either his Mampong informants were not correct or her name was purposely omitted from the Jauben list of queen mothers, if her reign ended in disgrace. It is also possible that she was known by another name.

Thus these marriages created a king of tripartite clan alliance in Asante composed of Mampong Beretuo at the hub and Oyoko and Aduana on the sides. This alliance gave Safo Kantanka great political power. For instance, just before his son Osei Kwame was enstooled in Kumasi as the Asantehene, some of the elders in Kumasi who were traditionally the kingmakers were against Osei. When Kantanka learned this, he sent an army and his head executioner to Kumasi to have the "troublemakers" arrested, tried and executed if found guilty. The ringleader, who wanted to continue as the regent, and two other elders were found guilty and decapitated. Then his son was enstooled.[51] Theoretically after the Asantehene was chosen by Asantehemaa with the concurrence of the Kumasi elders all the Amantuo kings were informed and his enstoolment depended on their approval as well. However, Safo Kantanka's influential position at the time can be more appreciated when we realize that none of the Amantuo Amanhene sided with the dissident group in Kumasi.

There were other marriages between the Mampong and Kumasi royal lineages besides those of Safo Kantanka and his uncles. Asantehene Kwaku Dua I married Ampoma, the sister of Mamponghene Aduru Firikyi, grand-daughter of Kokofuhene Apia Agyei, and great-grand-daughter of

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[51] Tradition provided by Mampong stool historians. Cf. also Atipin stool history IAS/AS 9, and Oyoko stool history in AIS/AS 28.

Asantehene Opoku Ware. Asantehene Kofi Karikari married Maboa, who was the grand-daughter of Ampoma. His brother, Mensa Bonsu, also an Asantehene, married Maboa's sister, Akua Kyem, but did not get any children. Owusu Kwabena, the son of Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto, married Akosua Aduako.[52] Another Mampong royal, Akua Anokyewaa, was married to Asantehene Karikari and then, following his destoolment, to his brother Mensa Bonsu. Finally, Asantehene Prempeh I married Abenaa Kyaa, on whom he begot Yaa Kyaa, the present Mamponghemaa. Abenaa Kyaa was great-grand-daughter of Asantehene Yaw Akoto.[53]

Other areas indicate increased intermarriage during and after the Opoku Ware era. Osei Hwedie, one of the most important Juabenhene in Juaben history, married Mampong Beretuo Saka Boanse, who later became Mamponghemaa and bore Mamponghene Safo Kantanka. This further explains the lack of opposition from Juaben when Safo Kantanka sent his army and political negotiators to Kumasi during the enstoolment of his son as Asantehene. And their grand-daughter, Amaa Nyantakyi Kokoo,

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[52]Rattray identifies her as Akosua Atia, which is different from the name given the author by Mamponghemaa. And Owusu Kwabena is given as Kobina Owusu. It was a fairly common practice for the elders to interchange names like this. When asked the reason, they replied that it did not matter much.

[53]Information provided by Mamponghemaa. Cf. also Rattray, Ashanti Law, Figs. 67 and 68, p. 254.

married another Juabenhene, Yeboa Kodie.[54] Another high ranking Juaben king, the Oyokohene Yeboa Kodie, who was a contemporary of Osai Hwedie, married Korama Wonta Kumaa, Saka Boanse's sister. From this union was born Atakora Kwame, who eventually became Mamponghene in the post-Safo Kantanka era. Mamponghene Safo Yao was also connected with the Juaben royal family: his father was Osei of Juaben, apparently an Odehyie Mrante.[55] Akua Kurome was Amaa Nyantakyi's cousin and the granddaughter of Saka Boanse. A granddaughter of Amaa Nyantakyi was Agyakoma III (also known as Ajakuma Fofie Ababio), who married Kokofuhene Asare Amponsem and bore Mamponghene Gyima Akoana (also known as Kwame Gyima). Agyakoma herself became Mamponghemaa.[56]

In Kumawu the web of kinship in this period continued, with several royals marrying other Amantuo

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[54]At Mampong there were two traditions indicating that she married the Juabenhene and another that she married Kumasi Adontenhene Kwateng Pete. Rattray, however, indicates one marriage with the Juabenhene and the other with Apao Boakye. We can be sure of the marriage with Juabenhene, but we do not know for certain who was the second husband. Rattray, Ashanti Law, Fig. 67. Mampong tradition provided by Mamponghemaa and her aunt.

[55]This is the term that was used by oral historians to refer to those members of the royal family who were eligible to stools but who did not occupy them because an uncle or elder brother was on the stool. They still had a higher social status than the princes and princesses who could not succeed to their father's stool due to matrilineal descent.

[56]Rattray, Ashanti Law, Fig. 67 and Mamponghemaa.

royals. Boama Asiama, whose grandfather was Nsutahene Agei Frimpong, married Juabenhene.[57] Boama's granddaughter, Yaa Mansa, married Asantehene Osei Yao and bore Akosua Konadu, who married Kumasi Adumhene.[58] Akosua Ade married Asantehene Dwaku Dua I and bore Yaa Dufie. Yaa Dufie's daughter Adumerewa married another Asantehene, Nana Prempeh I. Their only daughter, Adwoa Sewaa, became Kumawuhemaa.[59] To the south of Kumasi in Asumegya, Kokofu and Bekwai, some important marriages also took place: Kokofuhene Ofe married Safowa, an Asumegya royal, and they had one son, who became Asumegyahene Kwame Dwekyei, and two daughters, Denta Bima and Firima Panyin, both of them future Asumegyahemaa. Safowa's grandson, Kwame Dome, who became Asumegyahene, later provided a link between his oman and Bekwai through his marriage to Firima. Their son, Kwame Asibe, succeeded to the Bekwaihene stool.[60]

Thus the kinship connections in the second phase, the post-1750 era, strengthened the bonds that had been initiated prior to the Denkyera campaign and

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[57] Ibid., Fig. 50.

[58] We shall see later how marriages within Amantuo took place. The pattern was for the high families to marry their daughters and sons to families with a similar background, whether locally or away. However, most marriages were contracted locally.

[59] Rattray, Ashanti Law, Fig. 50.

[60] This may be the same person whom Rattray refers to as Osei Asibe. Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 134.

during the first half of the eighteenth century. At this time we have a body of Amantuo rulers who are closely related to one another, either through descent or through marriage or both. To understand above relationship, we must understand the family background of an Omanhene such as Mamponghene or Kumawuhene. So it would be useful to look at the names of the Amanhenes' mothers, most of whom gained influential political positions as queen mothers in their respective areas. Likewise political relationships between the Amantuo kings, which resulted in different realignments, can be understood if we understand the kinship factors which could have influenced political behavior. The Omanhene was the highest administrator in the oman, as the Asantehene was the highest administrator in Asante. Below the Omanhene there were Birempon, each of them the highest administrator in his town or the villages under him.[61] So if we are to determine the social origin of Asante administrators, the genealogical analysis we have presented so far in this chapter becomes indispensable. It will not suffice to say, as Bowdich and others have done, that Asante was ruled by an aristocracy, if we cannot show how such a group perpetuated itself. And one of the significant ways in which this was done was through selected and

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[61] Ibid., Ch. XII. Information also provided by John Darkwah, Senior Secretary, Kumasi Traditional Council.

restricted marriages within high ranking families.

The Ayete and Amantuo Interrelationships

So far we have concentrated on the marriages between Amantuo and Kumasi. There were other marriages that took place within the Amantuo. The pattern of these marriages shows characteristics similar to that of marriages between Amantuo, as detailed oral traditions in two Amantuo, Kumasi and Mampong, indicate. While no sweeping generalizations can be made for all of Asante, a comparison of internal Kumasi and Mampong kinship data with extra-Amantuo data indicates that, as far as possible, the Amanhene sisters and nieces were married to other Ahene. Second, next to Ahene, the Adehyieba and Aheneba were preferred. Third, marriages were also encouraged between the Ohene's son and any of his nieces. Fourth, came marriages between the Ahene's grandsons and grandnieces.[62] Fifth, there were marriages between members of the royal family and freemen, particularly with the subjects of the stool who were called Akonua Nipa. These similarities are not unique to Kumasi, for Rattray observed a striking similarity between Kumasi and its metropolitan areas, as far away as Tekyiman and Banda, Wam and Nkoranza: "Even in these more remote areas--remote that is from the capital Kumasi--I found everywhere confirmation

[62]This is the marriage between Ohenenana which we shall expand on later.

and repetition of the main features of the historical and constitutional surveys. . . ."[63]

Before we analyze the kinship relationships within Amantuo, a descriptive analysis of the ayete system would be proper. Ayete has received very little attention in Asante anthropological literature. Rattray, who gives it about five pages, believes that the word ayete is a combination of two words: ye 'wife' and te 'to patch, to mend.'"[64] Hence the literal meaning would be the marriage of a man to his wife's sister after the death of his wife. Thus "ayete means the substitution by the wife's family of another woman to take the place of a wife who has died (or sometimes to exchange a young for an old wife), the substitute being generally the sister of the deceased. ceased."[65] In Asante, as in most African societies, marriage was intended to join not merely two individuals, but their two families or lineages. The ayete system could be seen as a special means of continuing or perpetuating this union, with the least interruption of the functioning of the two families or groups. Once an Asante informant said of ayete:

> In the olden days if a wife died and her family and your family got along very well they could

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[63]Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 269.

[64]He equates ayete with sororate. Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 27.

[65]Ibid.

> give you another of their daughters (if there was any unmarried) to marry. Neither of you would be a stranger to each other. Neither would the children of the deceased have any difficulty with their aunt-stepmother. Neither would there be any major readjustment problems with the other members of the family due to the new husband or wife.[66]

However, in situations where the families did not get along well, or the husband-wife relationship was precarious, the death of the wife did not inspire the husband to ask for the hand of his wife's sister, nor did his in-laws feel obliged to accept such a request.

Ayete was more complicated than sororate. Closely connected to it was the man's levirate obligation to be a substitute husband for his deceased brother's or uncle's wife or wives. Providing a husband in this way had advantages very similar to those enumerated by the informant above, with the important aspect remaining the same: smooth functioning of the kinship units with the least disruption. In this marriage, the person who inherited the deceased man was also expected to take care of his widows and children until adulthood.[67] According to tradition no man could refuse this obligation for fear of punishment by the saman or ghost of the deceased person. The Asante believed that the

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[66]Information provided by Nkwantakesihene. This is in agreement with information given the author by the Gyasehene Nana Opoku Mensah and Manwerehene Nana Kwabena Boateng.

[67]Nowadays, however, this custom is not followed, partly due to modernization and decreased family dependence.

ghosts of the deceased were capable of taking revenge on their living kin, if the latter did not fulfill certain expectations such as proper burial ceremonies, libation in Adae ceremonies, etc.[68] The saman revenge took many forms: unexplained illness, misfortunes involving loss of property or, in extreme cases, death. The okomfo ('priest') consulting the obosom ('guardian spirit') could tell the family when the misfortunes were due to saman revenge.[69] Certain expected ceremonies were performed before a man officially inherited his brother's or uncle's wives, otherwise his ghost might punish the offender. These rites mainly centered on pouring the libation and uttering the following words:

> So-and-so, they say that when a cutlass breaks, they put a new shaft to it; today they have taken your wife and given her to me, I beg you to look well after me and her. Let these children prosper and serve me, and let me beget others to add to your own.[70]

If the wife was too old and her husband's successor did

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[68]The Adae ceremony was more than a ceremony. It was an occasion for the renewal of continued relationship with the departed souls of the ancestors; the time for renewing the allegiance to the Asantehene by his Birempon; and the time for prosecuting those Ohene whose previous behavior violated any laws. For a detailed study of this ceremony see Rattray, Ashanti, op. cit., Chs. V-IX.

[69]On Saturdays and Sundays some residents from Kumasi visit the okomfo who live outside of the city to consult him about illnesses that have not been cured after several visits to modern hospitals in the city. The author met one educated Ghanaian who spoke English fluently and who was being treated by one of these okomfo for mental breakdown.

[71]This is a translation of the Asante version given to Rattray by his informants, Ashanti Law, p. 28.

not wish to take her, she could refuse to go to her family, stating that she would stay and marry the ghost of her deceased husband. But it was only in extreme cases that a man refused to inherit his predecessor's wives or that the wives refused to be so inherited. We are using the term "inherit" here because when the takeover libation ceremonies were performed, the word "marriage" was never used. Since the deceased had performed marriage rites and given a dowry to legitimize the marriage, it was not necessary to repeat the same process; the first one was not considered broken. Death of the spouse was not equated with breaking of marriage.[71]

Sometimes when the new husband was too old and the deceased husband had younger wives, there was also a customary precedent to be followed. He had the right to give the wives the choice of taking his brothers, nephews or grandsons for husbands.[72] This choice was beneficial to all the parties concerned: the wives and their potential husbands could express their preference for the family member they wanted to spend their lives with.[73] Other aspects which the new

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[71]This was the reason why the deceased husband's family asked for the return of the gifts paid by the latter in case the widow refused to be inherited by his successor. Rattray, Ibid., p. 29.

[72]Ibid.

[73]The joking relationship which existed in Asante was an important indicator of how different members of

husband had to take into consideration were his age, which would handicap him as a provider for extra wives, especially if he was not rich; his sexual potency; and the emotional problems he would encounter, particularly if the wife or wives he inherited could not get along with his own wives.

The formation of ayete has its roots deep in Asante history. As the Asante society was expanding, spouses were selected from local families and clans, especially those within the same village or town. As the expansion continued and the village became larger, people moved temporarily to their nearby farms and built houses which were at first occupied seasonally but eventually became new villages. The people who moved into these villages owed their allegiance to the king of the town they came from. The kinship links were weakened or strengthened by the length of time the new village had been permanently occupied, the frequency of contact with the original town, the degree of dependence or self-sufficiency of the new town and the number of marriages taking place between the two villages.[74] Marriage contact between the new town and

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the extended household got along. When the above method of spouse selection was followed, the deceased man's successor partly relied on this joking relationship as an indication of how the new couples would get along as husband and wife. Information provided by Nkwantakesihene and Manwerehene, op. cit., p. 25.

[74]These marriages could be broadly classified on two levels: those between the royal families and those

the old town continued for a long time, since most of the migrants in the new village came from the old town.[75] Various terms were used in connection with these marriages. First, wives married in those circumstances where the man selected his bride were known as doyere.[76] Another term used to refer to these wives was domkwa or odokwa.[77] Second, ayete marriage was also known as asiwa, indicating that the bride was given to the spouse on the basis of well-established custom.[78] Third, there were fienipa marriages, which meant that a person had married one of his subjects. This term was confusing because it could mean a marriage with either a freeman or a slave subject of the stool. Fourth, afana marriage was a union between a man and one of his

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which involved non-royal members. Our concern here will be mainly with the former.

[75]Some villages and towns in Asante were founded by inhabitants who were mostly slaves put under the supervision of pure Asante or offspring of Asante and slaves. Information gathered from Anantahane, and Bantama stool historians reveal other villages settled in the same pattern.

[76]Information given by Kumasi Tafohene. This might be the same marriage that Rattray, Ashanti refers to as to-yere, referring to a wife who was bought. Presumably this meant a wife whose parents were either slaves or pawns of free parents.

[77]Information provided by Kyidomhene Oheneba Osei Yaw.

[78]This term was given by Nana Manwerehene of Kumasi. Christaller, op. cit., p. 461 gives the synonym of asiwa as siyere, meaning 'a woman bride.' For our purposes here we can ignore the second meaning.

female slaves.[79]

These marriages enhanced social cohesion between the families, clans, villages or towns. In the case of the afana marriage, it was the Abosua Panin ('head of the extended household') who wanted to marry one of his slaves or encouraged one of his free family members, such as his brother or son, to marry his slave. It could also be the Abosua Panin "dashing" one of his slave girls to male members of his in-law's family. Fienipa marriages were similar. During the expansion period there was every reason to encourage these kinds of marriages. They increased the level of mutual dependence and expectation of assistance, facilitated assimilation of the new and older slaves into the social system, minimized the formation and perpetuation of a slave class with a potential for revolt,[80] decreased the alienation of slaves and enabled the free people to use extensive normative control measures over their slaves.

This normative control, which was used at the lowest extended household level, was also used at the higher village/town level through ayete marriages among the ruling elite. On the village level the Odekuro

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[79]For other terms on marriage see Rattray, Ashanti Law, pp. 20-30.

[80]Wilks, 'Ashanti Government,' op. cit., pp. 229-230, believes that it was the king's policy to encourage the assimilation of slaves into the Asante society. It would seem that this is an Akan tradition which obviously preceded the formation of Asante nation.

'village head' married from the houses of the abosua families. It was with some of these elders, including those who were not his in-laws, that he discussed village affairs, adjudicated cases, and decided the policy to be followed.[81] Our hypothesis, which is supported by traditions of migration, is that in the earlier period when people were moving into Asante, there were no Amantuo councils to be consulted for policies affecting the village. Each village set its own policies, and it was only in case of extreme danger that they sought ad hoc alliances with the neighboring villages. Eventually this mutual alliance, together with the permanence of settlements, brought subjugation of one group by another.[82] In those villages that expanded into large towns through population increase, whether naturally or by war, the subjects under the control of the Odekuro's in-laws increased as well. This increase was manifested by the size of the Odekuro's town and often by establishment of nucleus villages in the suburbs of the old town under control of Mpanyimfuo (elders) whose stature was now increased to Odekuro. At the same time, the stature of the Odekuro of the old town changed to Ohene or king. By this time, whenever

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[81]Tradition provided by Jamasihene, op. cit.

[82]For example, the traditions and development of Mampong, Jamasi and Apaa indicate that in the olden days they were independent units, but that eventually the last two came to be subjugated to Mampong authority. Ibid.

any policy decisions for the entire area were discussed, the Ohene would call his Adekuro and Mpanyimfuo to his court for the purpose.[83] The significant aspect we should note here is that both the initial Odekuro's council and the new Ohene's council were composed of people connected by marital or consanguinal ties.

Yet another aspect that we may note here is that the advantages mentioned earlier as being a result of two marriages were also present here. When the Ohene married into a family, he not only sought the advice of his in-laws initially, but later he sought the advice of his sons, who now occupied a prominent position in their own abosua. The Apaahene married into the houses of the Abontendomhene, Ankobiahene, and Kontirehene, and the closest, most influential advisers in any affair in Apaa are the members of those three houses. The rulers of these houses are also the sons or grandsons of the present or previous Apaahene. The three houses are the ayete families of the Apaahene.[84]

The process of evolution of the position Odekuro

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[83]Again it should be noted that not all the elders in the old village were fortunate enough to start their own villages. Those household heads who were not so lucky, yet were members of the old vilage council, did not necessarily lose their positions as a result of expansion, but their stature was obviously lower than that of their more fortunate friends who benefited from population expansion and kinship ties with the ruler of the old town. Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah and John Darkwah, op. cit.

[84]Information provided by Apaahene Nana Owusu Sekyere and his elders.

to Ohene is duplicated at a higher level by the evolution of the Amantuo, as well as that of their rulers. Thus, for Amantuo like Mampong and Kumasi there was a dual process of evolution. The first process, which is identical to that described above, would involve the development of Mampong stool from a small village in Gyamfi Wono or Akrofonso.[85] Some of the kings (those political figures who occupy a position higher than Odekuro and are customarily recognized and accorded the rank of Ohene, as distinct from Odekuro) would be related to Mamponghene through kinship ties.[86] The Ejurahene, Kontirehene and Akwamuhene, three of the most powerful kings of Mampong, were the sons of the Mamponghene. These stools were given to the families of the Mamponghene's wives, since after the death of the initial occupants the successors came from the abosua of those wives.[87] The second process at this level, which also constitutes the major difference with the lesser stools, is concerned with the incorporation into Mampong oman of those kings who were not connected with Mamponghene's family by marriage. Jamasi and

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[85]Sanakoroa stool history, IAS/AS 161; Beposo stool history, IAS/AS 195; Ntonso stool history, IAS/AS 171; Asokore-Mampong stool history, IAS/AS 79; Akokofe stool history, IAS/AS 151; and Amoafo stool history, IAS/AS 200.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Information provided by Mamponghene stool historians, Kwasi Asoako and Kwaku Abrebrese.

Apaa are the best examples of this. We should point out, nevertheless, that the rulers of both of these states belong to the same royal family as Mampong: Beretuo clan.[88]

The council responsible for governing the oman with the Omanhene is more complex than the Ohene's and Odekuro's councils, though essentially of the same nature. The ayete ties are also fairly similar in kind but different in their details. Thus, whereas prominent families of the same clan may not marry among themselves, they can marry from the other clans, and the sons they beget can then be encouraged to marry their father's sister's daughters. The king's sister could also encourage her son to marry her brother's daughter.[89] This was the only form of marriage within the family that insured that the social origin of Amanhene would be closely connected with the stool occupants. Another important form of marriage occurred between families occupying important offices such as that of Ohene, and, rarely, Odekuro, within the oman. Thus it was impossible for the Akwamuhene of Mampong

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[88]Information provided by Jamasihene and Apaahene and their elders.

[89]Information gathered by Rattray, Ashanti, op. cit., pp. 37-38 is similar to that given to the author by elders in Asante: that marriages with father's sister's daughter or mother's brother's daughter were not merely preferred, but actively encouraged. Other marriages within the kinship system were discouraged and considered incestuous.

to marry a royal of Jamasi stool; the son from this union would one day become the Jamasihene and a participant with his father, or if his father were dead, with his cousin in the oman affairs. Ahene within Mampong might also marry among themselves: for example, the Kontirehene would marry from the Gyasehene's family and the son could be Gyasehene.[90]

Whereas in smaller stools (Odekuro or lesser Ohene) the ayete were fairly local, in larger stools they were spread over a wide area comprising various villages. One very important function of ayete--social control--determined where the Odekuro or Ohene chose his asiwa. As a general rule the ayete family was chosen from within Odekuro, Ohene, or Omanhene's villages and towns. One informant[91] stated that it was easier for the Ohene to exercise control over his region by marrying there and having or creating stools for his sons to occupy by giving them to his wife's family--the ayete family. It was also considered improper for an Ohene to have an ayete in villages owned by another Ohene.[92] It was also believed that if

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[90]Although the Gyasehene stool is not an abosua stool, it is not unusual for the Gyasehene to ask his sister's son to be an apprentice for this position. This was particularly true when the father was a prominent person and it was not possible for the son to get a better position elsewhere.

[91]Nkwantakesihene of Kumasi and his elders.

[92]This situation occurred, but not often. Usually it came about when an Ohene married from one or

the Ohene married only from among his subjects, there was less chance of his being poisoned by his wife.

But the most important reason we can deduce for asiwa marriage was that it increased political integration.[93] This function was influenced by many factors: the location of ayete families, their selection from local or distant groups, expectations which entered into the picture before such marriages, the role of an ayete wife in influencing major political direction, especially in her old age, her role as a queen mother, etc. To illustrate these factors, we shall examine the formation and genealogies of various ayete families in both Kumasi and Mampong. We shall also examine important political offices occupied by the offspring of these unions.

Manwerehene's stool is one of the ayete[94] of the Asantehene from the time of Asantehene Kwaku Dua I.[95]

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two families of his subjects, a few of whom were living in the village of another Ohene. His subjects, nevertheless, owed allegiance to him and cooperated minimally with the policies passed in that village except in work of a public nature.

[93]This does not mean that the king did not love his asiwa wives either before or after marriage. He did, yet he did not--this is a paradox which the author will examine later on when dealing with Domkwa wives.

[94]Information provided by Manwerehene, op. cit.

[95]He is also known as Fredua Agyeman. Sometimes the appellation Pambuo is added to his name. These names can be seen to originate in an admiration for his efficiency as an administrator who attempted to unify and rule Asante without military power. It was also due to his skillful formulating with his advisors

He created this stool after he became the Asantehene and put Kwasi Brentuo, the first Manwerehene, "in charge of all the Asantehene's money, especially the gold bullion and dust. When the money was brought from any place, it was he who weighed it for the safe keeping."[96] In performing this function, he had the assistance of Fotosanfohene, a senior member of Manwere Fekuo. He also had the purity of gold checked before weighing by the Asantehene's Buremfuo ('goldsmith'). From that point the Manwerehene was responsible for giving out gold dust as required by the orders of the Asantehene.[97] Manwerehene's post was very important: he was to be entrusted with all the Asantehene's "gold bullion and dust." Thus the author suspected there must have been a good reason for his selection. Initially, it was explained to him that "Brentuo was a faithful ahenkwa ('servant') of the Asantehene who was given that post as a reward for his loyal service." However, further

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of a good neighbor policy with the adjacent and tributary states, which minimized prospects for war considerably more than his predecessors had done. Agyeman means 'savior, guardian of the nation.' It was explained that he cared so much for Asante nation that he would do anything to safeguard it. For this reason, and particularly because he solved problems others considered too difficult, he was called Pam 'sew,' buo 'stone'--the one who sews stones. We will analyze his administration later in more detail. Information provided by Nana Owusu Ansa and several other elders in Asante.

[96]Tradition provided by Manwerehene, op. cit.

[97]At one point he interrupted our conversation and went into the bedroom to bring famfa, a measure used to scoop gold dust in weighing process, for the author to see.

investigation led the author to the real motive. Brentuo was the servant of Kwaku Dua well before he became the Asantehene. Barema Kwaku Dua at this time met Brentuo's sister, fell in love with her and married her.[98] Thus Brentuo, by the time he was made Manwerehene, not only was a faithful servant of the new Asantehene but also his brother-in-law; while his family had become an ayete of the Asantehene. The second Manwerehene, Brentuo Kumaa, was brother of the first. And when he died he was succeeded by Oheneba Kofi Nti I, the son of Kwaku Dua I and Ama Sewaa, Brentuo's sister.[99] All three of these Manwerehene had more to offer Asantehene than mere service. They had a stake in the safekeeping of their brother-in-law's or father's "gold bullion and dust." This is the crucial information that the earlier historians and travelers to Asante did not discover.

Another stool where politics was similarly involved was Akwamu (also known as Asafohene). At the time the Kumasi people were coming to that city and meeting the Asafo people, their leaders Oti Akenten met Boa Attakora, the sister of Asafohene Were, and married her. Their two sons, Adjei Twum and Asafo

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[98]Since at this time he was not on the Golden Stool, this wife was not truly an ayete but doyere. Nevertheless, once he became the Asantehene the family changed its status from doyere to ayete.

[99]Information provided by Manwerehene Kwabena Boateng.

Boateng, became Akwamuhene consecutively. The latter was Asafohene during the time of Asantehene Opoku Ware. Still another Akwamuhene, Ayeribi Kumafo, who reigned until the time of Asantehene Kusi Buadum and Osei Kwadwo, is connected by oral traditions with this marriage. Although some traditions state that Kumafo was the son of Oti Akenten, this is doubtful, especially when we consider that Oti Akenten ruled Kumasi c. 1660-1670 and Kusi Buadum and Osei Kwadwo were Asantehene in 1750-1765 and 1764-1777 respectively.[100]

An important episode which happened during the time of Osei Kwadwo affected the qualifications and requirements for this stool, and resulted in radical change from matrilineal to patrilineal succession. In one of the Kwadwoan wars in Akim, the Akwamu stool carriers, while retreating, left the stool behind, but the sons of Akwamuhene Akwawua (Kumafo's successor and brother), learning what had happened, returned to the battle scene and fortunately brought back the stool.

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[100]Information provided by Akwamuhene and his elders. Cf. also IAS/AS 38. Unless he lived a very long time, it seems unlikely that he served Osei Kwadwo if he was born before his father died. And if he ruled during Kusi Buadum's era, by this time he must have been eighty years old. This would be unusual, as the functions of Asafohene called for active participation in war--a difficult undertaking for such an old man. So, we might suggest that he was the son of one of the two Asafohene (who were Oti Akenten's sons) or the son of one of Oti Akenten's successors with a royal of Asafo who has been forgotten in traditions. The dates cited here are according to Wilks and Priestley, op. cit. Oti Akenten's dates follow Meyerowitz' estimates in Akan Traditions of Origin, Appendix IV, p. 139.

As a result of this incident,

> When Akwawua was at the point of death he ordered that since his sons had brought back the ancestral stool, the Akwamu stool, which had been one of matrilineal descent, should become a stool of patrilineal descent. This Kwakye Firam, an elder son of Akwawua, succeeded his father, and was succeeded in turn by his brother Kwakye Kofi, who no doubt was one of Akwawuah's sons. So, the stool of Akwamu became a patrilineal stool (Mmama Dwa).[101]

On the other hand, the author was also informed that the custom connected with stool succession, whether matrilineal or patrilineal, "was decreed by Osei Tutu on the advice of Okomfo Anokye" and the main reason for this was stated thus: "This stool because of the war can be inherited by nephew or son."[102] Although the two traditions conflict in detail, there is basic agreement that either nephews or sons can occupy the stools.

We have now to look for reasons behind this anomaly in the genealogies. My main informant, Nana Kofi Koran, who was also Apesimakaahene of Akwamu stool, stated that besides the above two Akwamuhene, who were sons of the Kumasihene Oti Akenten, there was another

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[101]IAS/AS 38, p. 5.

[102]Information provided by Akwamu stool historians. When the author was gathering oral traditions at Kumasi on the Akwamu stool, there were some questions that the Akwamuhene could not answer. Instead he gave the author one of the town criers to take him to Bebu village where the Akwamu stool historians lived about fifteen miles from Kumasi. The Akwamu stool historians who provided the author with information are Nana Kofi Koran, ex-Apesimakaahene of Akwamu stool, Nana Kwaku Abaase, the nephew of K. Koran, Nana Yaw Akwawua, Odekuro of Tabere village, and Nana Osei Kwabena, grandson of K. Koran.

one who was also a king's son.[103] This was Akwamuhene Asafo Boakye, whose mother--granddaughter of Oti Akenten--Akua Ampoma had married Asantehene Fredua Agyeman.[104] It seems reasonable to suggest that this is a stool of dual succession to allow the sons and grandsons of the Asantehene to occupy it. The Akwamuhene and Bantamahene were militarily very powerful in Kumasi: the Asantehene had an ayete in the former but not in the latter. For some unknown reason no Asantehene has ever married in Bantamahene's house, and no Bantamahene has ever married into the Asantehene's house. But Akwamuhene Asafo Boakye married Akua Afriiye, who was the sister of the Asantehemaa Yaa Kyaa, Asantehene Kofi Karikari and Mensa Bonsu, and who is the grandmother of the present Asantehemaa and great-grandmother of the present Asantehene Opoku Ware II.[105] This would indicate at the outset that having Akwamuhene share command of the Kumasi army with Bantamahene would ensure his keeping a close watch on the latter.[106] The Akwamuhene had kinship ties with

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[103] Ibid.

[104] Asafo Boakye had another brother, Anim Onyam, who ruled for a short time, dying young and leaving no blackened stool.

[105] Information provided by Akwamuhene stool historians and Asantehemaa.

[106] According to tradition the Bantamahene was not permitted to go to the palace without prior announcement. When he did, usually on Thursdays, he wore a morning cloth and had his drum beaten as he

the Asantehene, whom they had every reason to protect against potential foes like Bantamahene. Besides, following Osei Tutu's takeover as Asantehene, army reorganization included attaching the Akwamu contingent, which guarded him from Akwamu state, to the Bantama group. Furthermore, the marriage of Asafo Boakye to Akua Afriiye strengthened his link with the Golden Stool all the more.[107]

Internally the Akwamuhene had his ayete families scattered all over his villages. Adjei Twum, the third Asafohene and the son of Oti Akenten, married from at least twenty-four families spread throughout nineteen of his villages. In some of these villages he had two ayete families.[108] Two Akwamuhene

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approached the palace. In the olden days the Asantehene and his guards, upon hearing that sound, armed themselves, and other subsidiary forces connected with Gyaase clan (especially Asantehene's group) were alerted. Information given by Anantahene Nana Appia Dankwa. See also IAS/AS 3.

[107] According to Asante custom, following this marriage Asafo Boakye regarded as his children not only those born by his wife but also those of his sister-in-law, the Asantehemaa Yaa Kyaa. This relationship was further strengthened by the fact that Yaa Kyaa's husband, Oheneba Akwasi Gyiamebi, was the son of Fredua Agyeman--thus the two men were half-brothers. Genealogical information given by Asantehemaa.

[108] The following are the villages where he had ayete families: Bebu (1), Daako (2), Setiase (1), Adumasa (1), Burofuodu (1), Kokobang (1), Aheneba Kokobe (1), Konkomase (1), Ampa Bame No. 2 (2), Abadasie (1), Terede (1), Dumakwai (2), Apimanim Kokobang No. 2 (2), Nyakose (2), Afuanse (1), Nyantirem ase (2), Saape (1), Nomakosa (1), Fenkyine Bera (1). The number of ayete families has since increased to sixty-six. Informants: Akwamu stool historians.

who married ayete wives from these villages had their sons succeed them as Asafohene; these were Akwamuhene Kwakye Framo and Akwawua Dente. Other children of the Akwamuhene by ayete wives married stool occupants outside of this stool. A few examples of these are the children of Asafo Boakye and their spouses; Amaa Kwaku married Hiawuhene Akwasi Traa; Ama Kanii married Oheneba Kwadwo Afodjuo, the son of Asantehene Kofi Karikari; and Kwaku Dua married a royal of Kokofu. There was also intermarriage with the Akwamu house by his sons or grandsons from the ayete families: Kofi Akwawua, an Okyeame of Akwamu stool (one of ayete families), married Sewaa Abodwo and begot Asafohene Kwakye Kofi III.

Two important outsiders also married from Akwamu house and their offspring became prominent. One Aduma-hene married Adum Kyumuwaa and begot Akwamuhene Asafo Agyei. Kyidomhene Kwaku Boateng also married in this house and begot Akwamuhene Akyeampong Yaw.[109]

A third stool which we shall investigate is the Nkwanta Kesie. According to tradition, the first Nkwanta Kesiehene, Nana Boakye Yam (also known as Boakye Yam Panyin), came with his large retinue of subjects from Denkyera because he preferred Osei Tutu's moderate rule to that of Denkyerahene.[110] He also

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[109] IAS/AS 158.

[110] IAS/AS 136.

persuaded his Adekuro and the other, lesser chiefs under him to migrate with him to Kumasi. After explaining his desire to Osei Tutu, he was given land to settle, first at Mpankrono about five miles from Kumasi, then at Bronko two miles from the capital and eventually their present town, Nkwanta Kesie, about fourteen miles from Kumasi.[111] As soon as Boakye Yam settled in his newly adopted state, one of his two sisters, Nyako, married Asare, who was prince of an important Kumasi Ohene, Buokromhene.[112] Asare and Nyako's daughter, Akyaa Panin, married Asantehene Opoku Ware I, but unfortunately there was no issue. Obviously, these two marriages were important in enhancing Boakye Yam Panyin's acceptance and his incorporation into Kumasi ruling aristocracy.

These were not the only high-ranking men to marry in this stool. Akyeampimhene Oheneba Owusu Afriiye, "King Osei Tutu's own offspring,"[113] had a son, Saa Tire, who married Nana Bosompomaa, and their son, named after his father, became the fourth Nkwantakesiehene Owusu Afriiye. While Tire and Bosompomaa's son

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[111] Ibid.

[112] Buokromhene, a member of Asantehene's Gyase clan, swears the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene using the Mpomponsuo sword. There were two other swords of lower status used by low-ranking Ahene. IAS/AS 90. Tradition on marriage provided by Nkwantakesiehene Nana Owusu Afriiye II and his elders.

[113] IAS/AS 106, p. 6.

was Nkwantakesiehene, their daughter Akye Afua married the Asantehene Osei Kwame to whom she bore the sixth Nkwantakesiehene, Nkwanta Owusu.[114] The other daughter, Akyaa Akua, married Nkwanta Nifahene of this stool (commander of Nkwantakesihene's right wing army division), but divorce followed and she later married Oheneba Osei Beedikwa, the son of Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto. Nkwantahene Owusu Afriiye's sister, Ama Sewaa, married Adumhene Adjei Kakabo[115] and bore him Yaw Bookyere (also known as Boakye Yaw), who became the fifth Nkwantakesihene. Kwaku Kan, a brother of Yaw, became the seventh Nkwantakesihene. Yaw and Kwaku had several sisters as well. Abenaa Yinka, who later became Nkwantakesihemaa, married Kwadwo Mafo, an akoa or free commoner of Nkwanta stool, to whom she bore Kwaku Antwi, the eleventh Nkwantakesihene. Adwoa Badu married one Owusu, who was Asantehene's servant

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[114]Nkwanta Owusu's sister, Sewaa Ntokuapim, married Kwadwo Aboraa, who was Asantehene's sword-bearer. This marriage is significant because it shows one group of eligible men for the Asantehene's daughters--his servants. Sword-bearers had a high rank among palace servants and were used extensively in diplomatic missions to accompany the Akyeame who were the chief negotiators. Sometimes the sword-bearers were sent out alone on less important missions. Genealogical information provided by Nkwantakesihene and his elders.

[115]This is another high ranking Ohene in Kumasi politics. He serves the Asantehene within the Akwamu clan and ranks second to him. The first Adumhene was from the contingent of soldiers who guarded Osei Tutu from Akwamu kingdom on his way to succeed his slain uncle, Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa.

(aprafoni or elephant tail switch holder) and they had Osei Yaw, the future Nkwantakesihene.[116] Akosua Aboraa married Kwadwo Kokoo, Asantehene's sword-bearer and bore him Afia Nyako, who in turn married Asantehene Mensa Bonsu. To this latter union was born Oheneba Kwaku Dua, who became Nkwantakesihene, and when Prempeh came from exile in 1924 he was promoted to Akyeampimhene. From these marriages we can see the distinct inter-relationship among Nkwantakesi, Akyeampim, and the Golden Stool, as well as a limited one with other Adum stools. Although Nkwantakesi stool is an abosua stool, it seems quite evident that it is significantly influenced by the Asantehene through marriage. Furthermore, most of Nkwantakesihene are either sons or grandsons of the Golden Stool.

The influence through marriage was not limited to the Ohene alone. It extended to the queen mother who happened to be the mother of the stool occupant and at the same time the wife of another important office-holder within or outside of that stool. We cited examples of this while discussing marriages between Amantuo, as in the classic example of Asantehene Osei Kwame's parents. It is equally true at the local level, as is shown by the three detailed cases we have been discussing. Thus while Abenaa Yinka was the queen mother of Nkwantakesie, her two brothers, Yaw Boakye

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[116]This is probably the same person as Nana Yaw Asamoa, No. 8 in IAS/AS 136, p. 5.

and Kwaku Kan, were Nkwantakesihene; her father was in the Adum stool; her sister was married to the Asantehene's servant; and her nephew, Osei Yaw, probably occupied the stool during her reign.[117] Even more important, the Asantehene, her kin, could utilize her excellent connections to keep informed of potential dissatisfaction in the stools with which she was associated.

In the selection of the successor to stools we know that the queen mother played an important part, particularly if she was a woman of strong character. Whenever the Ohene died, it was the queen mother who convened and consulted the members of the royal lineage as to the qualified candidates to be nominated and recommended to the elders for confirmation. It was normal for her to prefer her brothers, sons or closest nephews to other members who were farther removed. If she had been closely associated with the deceased Ohene, she also influenced the latter's selection of heir apparent. She also had the right to choose the king's senior wife. She advised the king before he was enstooled as well as afterwards, either at home or when he was traveling, except when he was traveling to war. When the Ohene's council was in session, she sat on the left side of the king. "She alone has the privilege of rebuking him, his spokesman (Okyeame), or his

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[117]IAS/AS 136.

councillors in open court, and of addressing the court and questioning litigants. To her, too, petitions are addressed praying for pardon or mitigation of sentence."[118] Thus her office carried with it considerable power, especially in the olden times. In those days, "when the chief had to be chosen it was the Queen Mother who had most say in her choice."[119]

Thus when the Ohene was selecting his potential spouses, he restricted his choices to his own subjects or to stools he wished to establish close ties with. His spouse served both family and political functions. He could expect cooperation and support from his in-laws, especially in those cases where he created the stool for his wife, who then became the queen mother, while her son, brother or uncle became the ruler with the full confidence of her husband. In the event the Ohene was married to a doyere before he came to the stool, which was fairly common, those sons and daughters born to him before enstoolment had fewer rights than

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[118]Rattray, Ashanti, op. cit., p. 82. Additional information related to the ohemaa's role was provided by Asantehemaa, Mamponghemaa, Jamasihemaa, and various Obaapanin in Asante.

[119]Rattray, ibid. Her power was checked in various ways. She, too, could be destooled when it was deemed by the Ohene or the majority of elders or members of the royal lineage that she had neglected to perform her duties as customarily expected. She was constitutionally limited to nominating up to three candidates to succeed the deceased Ohene. After this, the elders elected and enstooled the successor from among the eligible royal lineage members.

those born subsequently. In Bantama stool, a patrilineal stool, sons born before the father assumed office were not qualified for the stool.[120] Advantages of establishing ayete were anticipated by the family of the bride: some of the family members were qualified for appointment by the king to other positions. With ayete also came the creation of a stool and an Ohene with citizens to whom he was expected to administer for the king. The sons of the newly-created stool could become the Odekuro or Ohene of that stool, or they could be appointed to stools restricted to the sons and grandsons of the Ohene. The family also experienced a definite upward mobility. When the king did not marry in the ayete family, he was required to compensate them--apparently the family must have felt that the Ohene, by not marrying into it, was reducing the number of offices that children of such unions were entitled to hold.

Viewed this way, marriages in Asante yield considerable and essential information as to the reasons why certain individuals occupied official positions. The Ohene gained from the services of honest relatives, and the families were willing to participate in what was a superextended and fairly complex government of their country.

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[120]Information provided by Bantama stool historians.

CHAPTER IV

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF STOOLS. I

In Asante the word Akonua (Stool) has two meanings. First, a simple and very well carved wooden stool on which the Asante people sit. The designs, figures, material, and the quality of artistic workmanship often indicated the social or political rank of the owner. The 1818 war between Asante and Adinkra, the King of Gyaman State, which was a tributary of Asante, occurred because Adinkra had his goldsmiths make a gold stool similar to Asantehene's Goldon Stool. When Asantehene Osei Bonsu heard of this stool, he sent one of his Akyeame to get it, "because two masters cannot sit on the same stool."[1] Whereas specific designs were reserved for certain kings, there were other designs that depicted environmental figures such as Nsebe Gwa (amulet stool), Osebu Gwa (leopard stool), Srane Gwa (moon stool), Esono Gwa (elephant stool), or Damedane Gwa (draught board stool). Other designs expressed more abstract ideas such as Nyansapow Gwa (wisdom knot stool); still others indicated whether the

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[1] Information provided by Akyeame Penyaa and Bafuo Osei Akoto.

stools were for men (Mmarima Gwa) or women (Mma Gwa), for Ohene (Kotoko Gwa) or for Odekuro (Mmom Gwa), or for a poor man--this last, interestingly, was called Mmamma Gwa (two-penny stool).[2]

The second meaning of Akonua is a political office. A lineage or clan head,[3] a village or town head, the head of a collectivity of non-related members forming a group (such as a fekuo) that serves the king, would occupy a stool. These political offices could also vary in rank from Panyin (an elder and leader of one or several extended households) to Asantehene, with hundreds of subordinate Ohene under him. These could be also ranked from Odekuro (village headman) through low ranking Ohene (head of a few villages) to high ranking Ohene (in charge of several villages and towns). The office-holder's relationship to the Asantehene would be that of Birempong.[4] During the council meetings each elder or Ohene sat on a carved stool, and depending on his status, there was a servant called Akonnuasoani who carried the stool from place to place or laid it on

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[2]See chart of Traditional Akan Stools Ghana prepared by Emerico Samassa-Mayer in collaboration with the Ghana Museum and Monument Board, n.d.

[3]Meyer Fortes, "Kinship and Marriage Among the Ashanti," in R. Radcliffe-Brown & Daryll Forde. eds. African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1950, p. 254, footnote 3.

[4]Likewise, the formation of the Asante confederacy, c. 1700, lesser Ahene had the Birempong relationship to one of the major Amanhene.

its side if the occupant was not sitting on it.[5]

When the office-holder died, the seat which he used was blackened, and certain rituals were performed to consecrate it before it was put in the akonnua danmu (the stool house), where ancestor worship was performed and libations were poured regularly. Not every stool was consecrated and put in akonnua danmu. If someone was removed from the office for maladministration, or if he ruled for a short time, or became blind and abdicated, or committed suicide, then his stool was disqualified.[6] Continued occupation of any office was strictly governed by long established traditions which formed what might be looked upon as civil service rules of procedure. Violation of any of these rules re-activated control mechanisms which could result in the warning, reprimand, censure or destoolment of an official.[7] In the olden days, destoolment was achieved by taking the official's mpaboa (sandals), or in extreme cases by suddenly removing the stool from under him. When his buttocks or feet touched the earth he

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[5]Nowadays these stools have been largely replaced by Western-style chairs, which are permanently located at the Dwaberem (meeting hall near or at the palace). However, some Ahene still have their traditional stools carried about wherever they go to symbolize their status and office.

[6]Information provided by Nana Jamasihene and his elders.

[7]This term and its counterpart, enstoolment, both of which will be frequently used here, mean dismissal from office and installation in office respectively.

was considered to have lost any sanctity connected with the office he occupied, and could now be insulted and mocked by anyone for his maladministration.

Abosua Panin Functions and the Origins of Various Stools

The origin of stools is closely connected with Akan traditions and the role of the extended household head, who participated in the policy decisions affecting his community. This head, due to his seniority, knowledge of local traditions, customs, and norms, and the interests of his maximal lineage, had been chosen to represent his people in any public discussions in which their interests and welfare were involved. Such extended households or lineages were the smallest viable political units. According to Fortes, "every such politically unitary lineage has a male head (Abosua Panin) who is often ipso-facto one of the chief's councillors. He is chosen from among all the living males (Adehye), irrespective of age or generation, by consensus of the whole body of members of both sexes." Senior men were considered the best qualified: "In practice, of course, the decision rests mainly with older men and women, and especially with the former, and only mature men are chosen for the position."[8]

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[8] Meyer Fortes, op. cit., p. 255. In Asante as well as in most African societies where writing was not in use, the traditions which formed the tribal constitutions, and the cases knowledge of judicial decisions and precedents was learned by stages. It took a long

The functions of Abosua Panin were varied. He was the chief adjudicator and arbitrator of the disputes arising within the group. Any time a member of his group was involved in a case with an outsider, the Abosua Panin was consulted, either for advice or to represent him in funeral ceremonies, in religious or ritual ceremonies, in new marriages or sororate/levirate marriage after the death of one of the spouses, in sharing or distributing any monies or goods in kind whenever occasion demands it. The Abosua Panin was advised by the adult family or lineage members. His chief assistant in executing the above responsibilities for his lineage was a senior lineage woman known as Obaa Panin. About the relationship between the Obaa Panin and Abosua Panin Fortes writes:

> . . . There is a very high degree of equality between male and female members of the lineage. It is common for the head to be assisted by a senior woman (Obaa Panin) informally chosen by him and his elders. This is extended to the State as a whole and to each chiefdom. The senior woman of the royal lineage is the Queen Mother of the chiefdom. . . . In particular she is often the best genealogical authority in the lineage and this gives her great influence.[9]

Whereas Abosua Panin is generally used for lineage segment leader, the head of a large maximal lineage

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time to master enough of this knowledge to command the attention and respect of an audience; this made it very unlikely for a young person to be elected to the position of Abosua Panin. Age in those societies is a desired status-value unlike in Western societies where it is not.

[9]Fortes, op. cit., p. 256.

has the higher status of an Odekuro or Ohene. Every family in Asante nowadays has an Abosua Panin. In the older days this was not the case, since slave families--consisting of slave spouses and their married or unmarried children--did not have their own Abosua Panin. Their master (or Fiewura of the household or lineage to which they were attached) was also their Abosua Panin.[10] But with segmentation and population increase of the lineage members and slaves, the tribal founder of the maximal lineage and his descendants (or clan) would have considerably raised his status. For example, of all the Oyoko clan heads in Asante, the Oyokohene of Kumasi is the most senior, and the other Oyoko clan and maximal and lineage heads, spread all over Asante, occupy the positions of lesser Ohene or Odekuro, depending on the number of their dependents.[11] So the Oyokohene is not only an important Ohene in Kumasi but he is also the Abosua Panin of the Oyoko clan in all of Asante. In other villages, towns, and Amantuo throughout Asante there is a local Oyoko clan head or Abosua Panin whose duty, as in Bekwai, for example, is to hear

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[10]Rattray, Ashanti Law, op. cit., Chapter V.

[11]Originally, the Oyokohene of Kumasi was a mere representative of the senior Oyoko clan heads--the Juabenhene who could not afford to be at Kumasi whenever there were major cases to be decided. Even today, when Juabenhene comes to Kumasi, according to tradition he stops by Oyokohene's house to be briefed on the current events of the capital. Information given by Nana Owusu Ansah.

"all cases in which members of the various Oyoko kindred groups are concerned, including those from the group which the chief is chosen."[12]

However, his expanding functions did cause the Abosua Panin's position to become separated from the position of the Ohene who ruled people of various maximal lineages and clans. This separation seems rooted in the lineage that founded a certain village, town or oman. If the Ohene was of different lineage (though of the same clan), he was allowed to retain his position as the ruler of his area, although this position gave him senior or higher political status than that held by the Abosua Panin. We can see this by comparing the Oyoko clan lineages that founded Juaben and Kumasi.[13] The Kumasi Oyoko dynasty, which occupied the Golden Stool and expanded its political fortunes, was founded by the Oyoko lineage of Obiri Yeboa's line. The expansion and consolidation of those fortunes is largely due to the political and military leadership of that lineage (together with the advice of Okomfo Anokye). While the Kumasi dynasty was developing, the other Oyoko lineage, the Abosua Panin line, was founding Juaben, but was neither politically or militarily shrewd enough to wrestle this leadership from the Kumasi

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[12] Rattray, Ashanti Law, pp. 153-194.

[13] Juaben Stool History, IAS/AS 16; IAS/AS 44; IAS/AS 171.

dynasty. Hence, the Kumasi line continued to occupy the highest political office in Asante while Juaben appointed her representatives to occupy a much lower office in Kumasi.[14] Sometimes, the separation of the Abosua Panin from the Ohene of the same clan who ruled in the same town was due to political demands made at an earlier stage, where the most powerful position was put under the most efficient person, while the less demanding office of Abosua Panin (especially following considerable expansion) was given to a less ambitious member.[15] Whether or not the Abosua Panin occupied a lower political office than other members of the same clan, the highest Abosua Panin in Asante or within an Oman had considerable influence where matters dealing with the clan members (including the occupant of the higher office) were concerned.

The Abosua Panin occupied a family stool variously known as abosua akonnua or adehyie akonnua. The major qualification for election to this stool was membership in the lineage of the stool's first occupant, traced on the female line. All the free males who could thus trace their descent were considered Adehyie

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[14]Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., op. cit., Chs. VIII-XIII. See also Juaben Stool History, op. cit.

[15]Detailed genealogical studies of the Abosua Panin of other major clans besides Oyoko would be needed to reach a more definitive conclusion. The second idea here is based on limited information provided by two elders in Mampong.

(singular: Odehyie) or royals of that particular stool. Stools and successors which fall within this category will be referred to here as adehyiedwa. Anyone eligible for these positions will be termed Odehyie. Although, this is the common definition of the word close observation of the rules of descent, candidates, and stools they succeed to suggest that the definition does not conform to actual usage. For example, when the author was conducting an interview about a stool of patrilineal descent and candidates eligible for office were discussed, such candidates were referred to as Adehyie. Upon further questioning, the informant would answer that an "odehyie is anyone eligible to occupy the stool partially by virtue of his relationship either matrilineally or patrilineally, with the first occupant of the stool or with anyone who was appointed to the stool (because there was no available mature royal of the stool) and died on it."[16] The successors to the Bantama stool are referred to as Adehyie--yet this is not strictly speaking an abosua stool according to the first definition, because succession is through the male line.[17] Rattray uses Adehyie synonymously with free born.[18] This is another

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[16]Bantama Stool Historians: Nananom Antwi Panin and Antwi Kuma.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., op. cit., p. 51. Note the way the term is used in this sentence, "The

common usage of this term which we must keep in mind. Fortes uses it to indicate any male member of a politically unitary lineage who is elegible for the stool of such a lineage head. In this case he would consider Adehyie as "every person of free matrilineal descent."[19]

A second kind of stool traces descent on a patrilineal line. There are two such types of stools. One type is those stools inherited by brothers, sons and specified grandsons, but whose occupants are free people who could be classified as Adehyie. A good example would be the Bantama Stool. The other type would consist of those stools inherited by brothers, sons, and any grandsons. A good example would be the stools created by the Ahene for their sons and grandsons. We could call the first type adehye-mma-dwa, and the second ohenemmadwa. The author has coined these two words to describe the nature of these stools because the words that have been used to describe them so far are rather confusing or have ignored the difference between non-abosua stools. Thus Wilks uses mmammadwa to designate the stools in which occupants are succeeded by their sons and grandsons.[20] Although

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father of adehye wo (free child), as we have seen, did not incur any liability on his child's account."

[19]Fortes, op. cit., pp. 254-265.

[20]Wilks, 'Aspects of Bureaucratization . . .' op. cit., p. 220.

in this case he quotes Rattray, who was describing another stool (which we shall soon discuss as esomdwa or service stool), the definition can be taken to include the adehye-mmadwa and ohenemmadwa. There are many examples of ohenemmadwa all over Asante, the best examples in Kumasi being the Akyeampim, Kyidom and Atipin stools.[21]

Another kind of stool which is important in Asante is the esomdwa or ahenkwadwa. These stools are occupied by people who render certain services to the Ohene, such as drummers, hammock carriers, stool carriers, minstrels, or umbrella carriers. The occupants of these posts generally fall under the supervision of the Gyasehene or the head of the palace household servants.[22] Most of the occupants of these stools, especially at the lower level, are chosen by the leader of the group, accepted by the Gyasehene, and finally by the king, strictly on merit, according to how well they perform their job. However, in the upper levels, contrary to what some authors have written previously, succession follows a modified abosuadwa pattern. A good example of the esomdwa stool would be the post of the senior goldsmith,[23] whereas the Asantehene's chief goldsmith would be an appropriate example

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[21]See IAS/AS 9; IAS/AS 106; IAS/AS 158.

[22]Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., op. cit., pp. 90-92.

[23]See Asomfuo (senior goldsmith) stool history, IAS/AS 14.

of a modified abosuadwa stool.[24] More genealogical data would be needed from the esomdwa stool in order to determine the marriage patterns and the social origins of members of the middle level of this group. In the losest level, the recruits, in the olden days, were mainly slaves.

Wilks refers to still another kind of stool, which he calls poduodwa. He puts this stool in the same category as adehyemmadwa, esomdwa, and mmammadwa, explaining that these "are all established stools, in the sense that their occupants swear allegiance to the king; they are thus distinguished from abosuadwa or family stools, which are non-established and the concern only of the lineage."[25] The example that he gives for a poduodwa is the Bantama stool for Kumasi.[26] He puts the poduodwa stool in the same category as

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[24]See Adwumfuohene (Asantehene's chief goldsmith) stool history, IAS/AS 13.

[25]Wilks, 'Aspects of Bureaucratization . . .,' op. cit., p. 223. See footnote No. 34. Wilks' usage of these terms is confusing. Thus on the same page he attributes a major role to the lineage in the election of both adehyemmadwa and abosuadwa. Adehyedwa stools are described as hereditary i.e., "stools filled by election by a lineage from among its eligible 'royals' (Adehye)." What, then, one is bound to ask, is the major difference between these two stools?--Especially if adehyedwa stools are "filled by election by a lineage," and abosuadwa stools are "the concern only of the lineage?"

[26]Here again it is not clear how he is using this term in light of the above footnote.

adehyemmadwa because these are "stools created by the Ashanti kings but vested in the lineage."[27] This confusion explains the present author's decision to define these terms for his readers. The author will not use the term poduodwa hereafter because its meaning is neither clear nor significant enough in traditional usage, except for seven stools under Bantama. The Bantama stool historians referred to the candidates eligible for that stool as Adehyie, but in the patrilineal line.[28]

Each stool has a particular history connected with its origin, the conditions or reasons which led to its creation, and the king who created it. An investigation into the background of the four types of stools defined above will also reveal the reasons underlying the selection of men who had profound influence in Asante administration. Most of abosuadwa or adehyedwa stools owe their origin to the families who migrated to Asante from Adanse, Denkyera, and Akim before the formation of the Asante union or shortly thereafter. The ruling lineages in such families had occupied the same

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[27] Ibid.

[28] It was explained by these historians that the sons of the Bantamahene and his wives from the five ayete families established by the first Bantamahene Amakwatia Panin, are eligible for the stool. The sons who are eligible were those born once the Bantamahene was enstooled. Furthermore the sons of an important Bantamehene's daughters were also eligible; as well as the sons of the same Bantamahene sons, provided the latter sons married Bantama subjects.

positions in their former homes before the migrations. Thus the ruling lineage of Ejisu town, twelve miles from Kumasi on Accra road, were a splinter group of the royal lineage in Akyim Abuakwa before they came to their present habitat. This is also the case with most of the Omanhene ruling lineages, such as Mampong, Bekwai, Jauben, Nsuta and Kokofu.[29] Other adehyedwa stools were in the hands of the local rulers before the coming of Asante Amantuo royal lineages. Two of the most important stools in Kumasi, Amakom and Tafo, existed before the arrival of the Kumasi Oyoko family.[30] In fact, the latter two kingdoms were incorporated into Kumasi politics through marriage with Kumasi Oyoko backed by intense political and military pressures.[31]

Most abosuadwa stool lineages joined together before the Denkyera war on the recommendation of Okomfo Anokye in order to form a united front to fight their enemy. At a great meeting at Kumasi, Okomfo Anokye asked all the Ahene to bring their old stools to this city so that they could all be buried and new stools could be carved to replace the old ones. Every

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[29]The ruling houses of the last four Amantuo as well as Kumasi also have traditions indicating they migrated to their present habitat from Asantemanso, although their place of original dispersal seems to be Adanse. See IAS/AS 16; IAS/AS 44; IAS/AS 11; IAS/AS 171.

[30]IAS/AS 77; Kaase stool history, IAS/AS 35; IAS/AS 38.

[31]Rattray, Ashanti Law, p. 169.

important Ohene who had a stool was given the stature of Obirempong. This is the rank which entitles the new occupier, at least in Kumasi, to swear the oath of allegiance during the enstoolment using the Mpomponsuo sword forged and first used by Opoku Ware I.[32]

Migrations and Founding of Stools Before and During Yeboan Era

For a better understanding of the origins of these Obirempong at the time of the burying of the old stools, we shall look into a few traditions connected with some of these stools. There were those ahene who had migrated to Kumasi during the time of Kumasihene Oti Akenten.[33] We have the Anyinasehene stool, whose ancestress, Abena Baa Panin, came from the "sky through a silver chain (atwiaban) with other Oyoko members of the Oyoko clan and settled in Akim-Asiakwa." She descended from heaven with her stool.[34] From Akim-Asiakwa she migrated to Kokofu, lived there for some time and then joined Oti Akenten on his migration to Kumasi.[35]

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[32]Other swords used in descending order of importance and rank are ahwehwebaa and gyapatia.

[33]According to Meyerowitz, Akan Traditions, Oti Akenten was Kumasihene from c. 1660 to c. 1670, when he was succeeded by his nephew Nana Obiri Yeboa. He ruled Kumasi until 1697. Following his death, Nana Adu Gyamfi acted as a regent until Osei Tutu came back from Akwamu, op. cit., p. 139. See also IAS/AS 95; IAS/AS 34.

[34]Sometimes it is stated in oral tradition that the ruler brought his or her stool from the sky or from the ground as a means of legitimizing his position by giving it supernatural sanction.

[35]IAS/AS 78.

Yet another stool well established at this time was Asamang, which belongs to the Ekuona clan. Nana Amisare, the founder of this stool, was a contemporary of Kumasihene Oti Akenten. His younger brother, Obiri Mango, married Nana Pramang at Kokofu, and they begot Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa. Pramang, according to tradition, was the daughter of Nana Nkyewaa Nyame, the ancestress of Osei Tutu who descended from the "sky with a miniature golden stool and landed at a place called Asiakwa (the place of descent) in Akim."[36] Although Asamang is twenty-nine miles from Kumasi, this did not prevent the Ekuona from uniting with the Kumasi people in several campaigns conducted before the Gyakari war. On the other hand, Konahene, whose ancestress had migrated from Asanso, twenty-five miles from Kumasi on the Bekwai road, fought many battles with Oti Akenten and Kumasi rulers. But when Osei Tutu came into power, he was advised by Okomfo Anokye to extend clemency to the Kona people so that they could join together against Gyakari. The Kona people accepted the clemency offer and agreed to participate in the war on Osei Tutu's side.[37]

Most of the Aduana Ahene (kings) were well established at this time. According to Kwamang stool

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[36]Asaman Stool History IAS/AS 7.

[37]Kona Stool History IAS/AS 156.

tradition, there were seven of them: Domaahene, Kumawuhene, Asumegyahene, Boamanghene, Agogohene, Kwamanghene, and Kwasohene. These people trace their origin to the Asumegya-Asantemanso area. They participated in the meeting of the Asante states held at Asantemanso during the time of Oti Akenten. During Obiri Yeboa's period, Kwamanghene and Kumawuhene helped their brother Agogohene Ofori Koban, who was fighting Atade Firam--an overlord of the lands to the north and northeast of Agogo.[38] Atade Firam was defeated and his lands incorporated into what was later to be the Asante confederacy territory. Several Oyoko stools were also well organized during Oti Akenten's time. Forty-four miles from Kumasi on the Accra road in Asante Akyim is the Asankore (or Kwakye Dopoa) stool, whose elders recall their origin as Asumegya-Asantemanso at the time of Oti Akenten. The founder of this stool, Kwakye Dopoa, was an excellent soldier. His successor, Kwata Panin, participated in Domaa campaigns with his Kumasi kinsmen under Obiri Yeboa and Osei Tutu.[39] The Sewua (the Samanhene) stool owes its origin to a mystical creator who gave a stool to one Awua, a well known blacksmith. Later, when Oti Akenten reached Kumasi, the two men became friends. When Oti died, his

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[38]Kwamang Stool History IAS/AS 169.

[39]Asankare Stool History IAS/AS 198.

successor, Obiri Yeboa, incorporated Samanhene Omoako into the Kyidom (or rear-guard)[40] clan. Another Oyoko family had migrated to Kuntanase from Asantemanso and established its stool there before Obiri Yeboa's time.[41] Obuokurom stool tradition reveals that they were living in Kumasi well before Tafohene and Oti Akenten's time: "It is said that on the arrival of Tafohene, Obuokurom-hene was resident in the Kumasi area then known as Kwamang. . . . Tafohene came to meet the Obuokurom-hene."[42] His successors resisted Oti Akenten and Obiri Yeboa, but were defeated by the latter who, however, allowed the family to retain their stool in exchange for a promise to remain loyal to him. They proved this loyalty by participating in the Osei Tutu-Domaa cam-paigns.

The Beretuo lineages also had their dynasties occupying important Abirempong positions fairly early. The Adankragye (Opong Panin) stool traces its origin to Adanse-Ayaase, where their ancestress, Asin Abina Ahensani landed from the sky with her stool.[43] From Adanse-Ayaase she led her people to Adanse-Ahenson, where she met with the other Beretuo people.[44] From

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[40]Sewua Stool History IAS/AS 87.

[41]Kuntanasi Stool History IAS/AS 152.

[42]Obuokrom Stool History IAS/AS 90.

[43]Another version of the tradition is that the ancestors of this stool were the daughters of Asiamua Nyankopong Guahyia, who descended from the sky on a

here they all migrated to Behinase, where family quarrels brought further migrations--the seven major Beretuo branches separated, led by their leaders: Mamponghene, Amoafohene, Aboatemhene, Atasomasohene, Adubinsuhene, Boworobene and Adankragyahene. Adankra is the name of the river where the branch led by Nana Opang Afranyam, a contemporary of Oti Akenten, stopped (gya) about twenty-four miles from Kumasi on Bekwai road. His two successors, Opong Afram Kuma, a contemporary of Obiri Yeboa, and Ampong Abirim, Osei Tutu's contemporary, participated in the campaigns conducted by these two Kumasihene against Domaahene Kusi, Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari and Akimhene.[45] Most of Beretuo Ahene formed part of the benkum ('left') wing of the reorganized Asante army before Gyakari's war.[46]

Not all stools founded around the time of Oti Akenten trace their origin to migrating families. Ofori-Manso was the first stool created by Oti just before his early campaigns against Domaa people at Kumasi.

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silver chain in Adanse-Ahenson. Adankraja Stool History IAS/AS 153.

[44] Ahenson means a place where the kings stop (ibid.).

[45] Ibid.

[46] Beretuo is derived from aberewa 'old lady' and tuo 'fly.' The original name was Aberewatufuo, meaning the people of the old woman who flew. According to Amaafo stool history her ancestress did not die a natural death but flew into the sky. The name comes from this action or presumably from Asiama Guahyia who flew. Amoafo Stool History IAS/AS 200.

This was a stool for an Okomfo who had a "very powerful fetish or suman" which was consulted during the campaigns. His suman symbolized the authority of his office. The function of the stool holder was to fire the first seven shots as an indication of the declaration of war. Traditionally "as a soldier-spy of the Asantehene, he is the first chief to shoot seven gun shots on the enemy soil when they are about to wage war. He is in a sense the alarming chief of the Asantehene."[47] By the time Osei Tutu took over Kumasi as Ohene, the ruler of this stool had proven his value as an ally to the point that Osei Tutu, while reorganizing the military structure in Kumasi, was given the title of Twafuohene. He took part in Domaa and Gyakari campaigns.[48]

When Obiri Yeboa succeeded his uncle, other ruler families were still coming to Kumasi or settling in other areas, and these families eventually joined Obiri in his wars at Kumasi. One of these stools is Soadoro, which is the oldest in the Akwamu division. "This stool is said to have been created by King Obiri Yeboa, the grand uncle of King Osei Tutu. It is a stool of matrilineal descent and belongs to Asenie matri-clan or abosua."[49] The ancestress of this stool, Nana

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[47]Ofori and Mansa Stool History, IAS/AS 86.

[48]See also IAS/AS 165.

[49]Soadoro Stool History, IAS/AS 191.

Frimpomaa, had originally come from Denkyera, as a result of an internal family conflict, without bringing the family stool with her. At first Nana Frimpomaa and her small retinue settled at the site now occupied by Ghana National Cultural Centre Kumasi, but later, as a result of overcrowding and land scarcity, they moved to their present hometown at Ampabame. But before they moved, one of Obiri Yeboa's servants, Kwadwo Tene, who was a hunter, explored the area on which Nana Frimpomaa had settled and reported finding her and her people to Kumasihene Obiri. According to the tradition, "after the necessary negotiations, King Obiri Yeboa thus appointed his servant Kwadwo Tene to be the chief of the residents at this village of Kwadwo Kurom,[50] who became known as Soadorohene meaning a servant having left his master to find a place for him."[51] Nana Kwadwo Tene and the people he was to rule were given the responsibility of taking care of the king's silver stool, silver pipe, silver calabash and a pair of silver sandals. It is noteworthy here that the first stool that the Kumasihene created was a service stool; but while the occupants of later 'service stools'--esomdwa--were chosen by the Fekuo on the basis of their merit, this stool was reserved for Kwadwo Tene and his

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[50] I.e., Kwadwo's town, as this village came to be called in tradition. The stool is also Kurom as Kwadwo Tene's stool. Kuro 'town,' mu--'in at.'

[51] IAS/AS 191.

family. Thus it seems logical to conclude that service stools were not necessarily esomdwa. Neither did the rank of the stool depend on the stool being a service or family stool. Kwadwo Tene's stool is abosuadwa, and Soadorohene swears his oath of allegiance to the Asantehene using the highest sword: Mpomponsuo.

Ohwim stool was founded by Nana Obiri Yeboa, who was the brother of Domaahene Yeboa Afari, during the time of Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa or earlier. The brothers had migrated to the Kumasi area from Akwamu, where Yeboa Afari had tried unsuccessfully for election to Akwamuhene's stool. "After his failure to get the stool [he] left the place with his brother Obiri Yeboa, relatives and retinue for Kibi, or Chebi."[52] From here they migrated to Adanse-Akrokeri, where their stay was short as "they did not like the climate or local conditions."[53] Their next stop was Denkyera, where they stayed longer and multiplied. Then they migrated again to Brong region. Here the two groups separated: Obiri Yeboa came to Asante and settled at Kumasi next to the Tafohene, Amakomhene and Kaasenhene; Yeboa Afari remained behind for some time.[54] When he came to Kumasi to join his brother, he first settled at Suntresu (so named because the place was by the river bank). At

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[52]Ohwim Stool History, IAS/AS 18.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid.

that time Yeboa Afari killed an elephant and Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa asked for the elephant's tail and tusks, customary payment to the Kumasihene wherever game was killed in his territory. Afari refused, and this was one of the reasons why Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa attacked Afari, who by then was the Domaahene. His brother's successor, Ntiamoa, who was already in Kumasi, decided to fight on Kumasihene's side. Ntiamoa, the Ohwimhene, played a prominent role in both the war council and the campaign. After the first phase of conflict, Ntiamoa

> . . . convened a meeting of all the chiefs of Kumasi, excluding the Dormaahene. It was more or less the first business meeting of the would-be Kumasi state. Ntiamoah the Ohwimhene put it to the chiefs and the gathering that as a result of the skirmish between Nana Obiri Yeboa, Kumasihene, and Yeboa Afari it was of supreme importance that they should all unite and wage war against the Dormaahene Yeboa Afari and his son Dormaa Kisi who was said to be the Commander-in-chief of the Dormaahene.[55]

In the war that ensued Ntiamoa's role was so significant that his Kumasi allies conferred on him the title of Akyereko.[56] Ohwimhene's reason for joining

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[55]IAS/AS 18, p. 5.

[56]This title is a combination of two words, kyere 'guide or direct,' and ko 'war,' for "directing them to wage war against the Dormaahene." Kumasihene Yeboa died in one of these campaigns, and his successor Osei Tutu had no doubts about Ntiamoa Akyereko's loyalty and bravery or any hesitation about including him as one of the main confederate Ahene on the formation of the Asante union. Osei Tutu further recognized Ntiamoa's great contribution by appointing his son, Kwame Akwa, as Bechemhene; Ntiamoa's nephew, Affro, heading a border guard of three hundred men, was asked

Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa against the other Domaa people was that he realized Kumasihene's power and the support he had from the other groups living in Kumasi. We can also conclude from Kumasihene's demand for the elephant tail and tusks from Domaahene that this incident occurred after the Kumasihene had defeated or allied himself with the other Kumasi rulers such as Tafo and Amakom.

The only reference we have to the origins of some stools is that they pre-dated Osei Tutu's period. We cannot in this case determine whether the stools in question were founded at the time of Obiri Yeboa or Oti Akenten. A safe assumption for the purposes of our research here will be that these stools were created or in existence before the ascension of Osei Tutu to power. One such stool is Fumesua,[57] which performed the unique function of supplying war materials to Tafohene and the Kumasihene before these two states united, following a war between them which Tafo lost. Fumesua is located eight miles from Kumasi on the Kumasi-Accra road. Fumesua ancestors were genealogically related to the Tafo ruling lineage, which was why they did not supply weapons to Kumasihene

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to stay at Bodom and report any unusual army movements to Osei. Eventually, Affro became Bodomhene, and his assistant, Asene Gyiman, became the Ohene of Abrosankohene, another outpost. Ibid.

[57]Fumesua Stool History, IAS/AS 85.

exclusively.[58] After the defeat of Tafo, the Kumasi-hene marched to Aumesua, defeated them and brought them under his rule. When the town fell ". . . the residents at the village were captured and became subordinates of Kumasi. The Kumasi people then occupied the various houses of these residents save those of the Gyasehene and the chief stool carriers of the Fumesua-hene Nana Asua."[59] It is significant to note that the Kumasi people made no attempt to change the ruling dynasty, for when Nana Asua died he was "succeeded on the stool by his brother Obirempong Suahene."[60] Once Nana Asua saw that the battle was lost, he agreed to take the oath of allegiance to Kumasi authority in exchange for his being left in power.[61]

The rulers of Asokore-Mampong seem to have been Kumasi allies for a long time. "It is said that in the very old days, the occupant of this stool was the

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[58]During the war, the Asantehene supplied certain Ahene with weapons, while others were expected to buy their own supplies. In this case, as in the case of trade, the Asantehene expected to buy all the weapons he needed before the other Ahene bought theirs. The Ahene normally supplied with weapons came under the Gyaase Fekuo. Tradition provided by Tafohene Nana Boadu Kwadwo II and his elders.

[59]IAS/AS 85. [60]Ibid.

[61]It was not unusual for Kumasi rulers, and later those of Asante, to allow local rulers to continue in power after their defeat. But if the local ruler was very powerful, this policy was not followed; instead, he was executed and a member of his lineage promising loyalty to the Asantehene was enstooled as successor.

Nifahene of Kumasi, prior to the incorporation of Ashanti into a nation by King Osei Tutu."[62] The ancestor of this stool, Nana Poti Akomia, migrated from Kokofu Mmensianase, bringing his stool with him, after Oti Akenten had already left for Kumasi. However, prior to the Denkyera campaign, the rulers of Asokore-Mampong were not elevated to Nifa of the entire nation. That position was given to Mamponghene Boahen Anantuo, who, according to tradition, was an independent and very powerful[63] ruler, not easily left out of any serious political alignment in Kumasi. Though he still retains his position as the Nifahene of Kumasi, his significance among power brokers in that capital is inconsiderable compared to some of the newer Ahene created by Osei Tutu and his successors.[64]

Obiri Yeboa created several stools. He created the stool of Kyerema Kobia, who was responsible for six other Ahene whose stools were created at the same time. These stools are: Amoakohene, on Offinsu road: Twade Akuromhene (also called Osabin Kuma stool); Krapahene, or Ejisu road; Sepe Dotenhene, on Asokore Mampong road;

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[62] Asem Stool History, IAS/AS 79.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Stools held by Bantamahene, Gyasehene, Manwerehene Akyeampimhene and Ankobiahene have more power than Asokore-Mamponghene. This assessment is also based on traditions provided by the Ahene of these stools and their stool historians. See also Asokore-Mampong Stool History IAS/AS 79.

Sewiahene, on Jachie road, and Adensehene on Bonwire road--all of them less than fifteen miles from Kumasi.[65] The Sabin Kuma stool was created by Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa for his son. When Osei Tutu was making ready for the Denkyera campaign, all the Ahene of these stools were solidly behind him, as they belonged to the Kyidom Fekuo (or rearguard group or regiment) of the king's army. The ancestors of Kyerema Kobia trace their origin to a toa ('bottle') which symbolizes their authority and according to tradition "came down from the sky on a silver chain. On the arrival of the bottle, came the ancestors and relatives of this group."[66]

Some Ahene entered the Kumasi political orbit when they assisted Nana Obiri Yeboa. The ancestor of Paakoso stool, Opong Kesie, was a contemporary of Obiri Yeboa who lost his bid for succession to Tafo stool and was forced to flee from Kumasi.[67] He migrated with one of his strongest supporters, Nana Kwinin

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[65]Kyereme Kodua Stool History, IAS/AS 48.

[66]Ibid. One way of explaining the background to this myth is that the Okyeame is very influential. For this reason the family with the stool would like to legitimize its origin by ascribing it to a distant and powerful influence. In this case, the supernatural power in question would be Nyankopong or Nyame--the sky god. For stools tracing the origin of their ancestors to the ground, the superpower of origin would be the Asase or earth god. Information provided by Mampong stool elders.

[67]Paakoso Stool History, IAS/AS 167.

Yaw, who was Abontendomhene or Krontihene of Tafo state, and his army of 350 armed men. He first settled at Kotokurom, about half a mile from these people's present town. Afterwards, when Kumasihene was fighting the Domaa people, the Paakosohene Opong Kesie proved himself a brave and trustworthy ally. At the time of Osei Tutu, Kotokurom town became unhealthy to live in. Okomfo Anokye so informed Osei, who then ". . . ordered that for safety and security reasons it was of considerable importance that the residents at Kotokurom village should vacate and settle at the present area of Paakoso which was considered a more healthy place than Kotokurom. . . . The migration took place before the Ashanti-Denkyira war fought at Feyiase."[68] Osei Tutu and his confidant were not only able to reward this faithful supporter, but also to designate his village as the center for boiling war medicine for use by the Asante. The Asantehene was also expected to spend some time in this village before the beginning of any war.[69] The rise of this state would appear to be based on two factors. First, the desire of Opong Kesie and his followers to have on their side a strong ally they could rely on in the event of retaliation by by Tafohene. Second, the Kumasihene's desire for allies whom he could rely on for support against his adversaries both within Kumasi and its suburbs and

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[68]IAS/AS 167. [69]Ibid.

outside. Hence, there existed a situation of mutual dependence which served to strengthen loose bonds among those groups that had not been unified by kinship ties.

This situation was not unique between Kumasihene and the surrounding rulers. Five miles from Kumasi on Lake Bosumtwi road is Kyirapatre stool whose ancestor-founder Owiredu Okomfo was a contemporary of Obiri Yeboa.[70] Owiredu was a priest who was consulted by the Kumasihene before he proceeded into a campaign. "Tradition has it that whenever the king was about to take the field for war in the old days, he called at the Kyirapatre village in person and consulted the fetish or porcupine Meyam whether his adventure would be a successful one or not."[71] If the Okomfo gave him an affirmative answer, a sheep, nokwabuo 'true stone' kikanfofore 'new knife' and nsaa 'blanket.' This Okomfo was so good at predicting the outcomes of the wars for the Asantehene that his reputation was quite substantial. As a result, his services were valued not only during Obiri Yeboa's time but also later. Owiredu Okomfo and his successors were consulted before the Asante nation engaged in six major wars: Domaa campaign, Sefwi war, Denkyera war, and Akyim war--all of these fought during Osei Tutu's time; and, Akim and Gyaman wars, fought during the time of Asantehene Opoku

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[70] Kyirapatre Stool History, IAS/AS 182.

[71] Ibid.

Ware.[72]

The rule of Denkyerahene also caused the desertion of several politically important people who went to Kumasi and allied themselves with the Kumasihene. The Okyere-Kurom stool (also known as Okyere-Kwajan stool) is located in a village about twenty miles from Kumasi on Offinso road. It is of lower rank than most of the other stools we have been discussing here.[73] The Ohene swears to the Asantehene using the ahwehwebaa sword and serves him through the Atipinhene in the Ankobia Fekuo Okyere-Kwajan was one of the divisional chiefs in Denkyera state, but he decided to leave because he "disliked [Denkyerehene's] administration." The Denkyerahene, according to many traditions preserved in Asante oral history, had the reputation of being an iron-handed tyrant.[74] When he migrated from Denkyera Nana Okyere-Kwajan brought with him a large retinue of his followers, "ancestral stools and traditional horns which can be seen even today in front of Okyere-Kwajan stool. This exodus of Okyere-Kwajan is said to have taken place prior to the Denkyera war

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[72] Ibid.

[73] Okyere-Krom Stool History, IAS/AS 122.

[74] Although it is hard to assess the validity of these claims, their extent is of such a nature that we cannot absolutely rule them out. If they had been made by Kumasi rulers alone, we could infer that they were probably devised by court historians to justify their succession from Denkyera.

fought at Feyiase in which the Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari was defeated by the Ashantis."[75] On arrival in Kumasi he appealed to Kumasihene for a good place to settle with his people, apparently expressing his willingness to serve his new king. Once a suitable place was provided, he settled there, but later moved his people twice before they finally settled at their present location. Okyere-Kwajan participated with Osei Tutu in the war against Domaa and, of course, against the Denkyera.

So far we have seen some of the Ahene who were established in Kumasi either before or during the era of Oti Akenten and his successor, Obiri Yeboa, and who eventually formed part of the Asante union. To complete this picture we shall look at the stool developments during Osei Tutu's time--before the Gyakari war and after. This will be important to a thorough understanding of the future structure and changes within the old ancestral stools, stools created by his predecessors, stools founded during his era, and stools that he and his successors created. These were the stools which were necessarily occupied by important personalities who influenced Asante politics and administration in their capacity as Birempong, lesser Ahene, Mpanyimfuo, or as high-ranking Ahenkwa serving the Asantehene or lesser Ahene.

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[75]IAS/AS 122.

Political Expansion and New Stools Early in Osei Tutu's Reign

Migrations from Denkyera that had brought several ruling families and their followers to Asante continued even during Osei Tutu's time. The Toase stool, also known as Yim Awere stool, is located in Toase town--15 miles from Kumasi on the Kumasi-Bibiani road. Within Kumasi political set-up it comes under the Bantama division.[76] Nana Awere was a member of the royal lineage of the Abankwa stool in Denkyera while Osei Tutu was staying in that country as security for Kumasi loyalty.[77] It seems, however, that the real reason for his being there was to prevent Kumasi from seceding from the Denkyera rule. This system of giving royal hostages is widespread among the Akans. John Owusu Ansa and William Nkwantabisa were given to the British in the 1830's by the Asantehene for that reason.[78] And later in the nineteenth century, after the 1874 Anglo-Asante war, the Asantehene Kofi Karikari offered his son, Prince Kofi Nti, for similar reasons.[79]

Nana Aware, knowing Osei Tutu's potential if he

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[76]Toase Stool History, IAS/AS 128.

[77]According to the traditions given here and in the several other stool histories, Osei Tutu was in Denkyera to undergo necessary training to prepare him as an able ruler of Kumasi. IAS/AS 128.

[78]Metcalfe, op. cit., p. 88.

[79]Claridge, II, op. cit., pp. 161-2.

went back to Kumasi, offered to come to Kumasi and be one of his elders. This contact later turned out to be very important, as tradition reveals. When Osei Tutu finally escaped from Denkyera and returned to Kumasi via Akwamu, and Aware learned of his elevation to the position of Kumasihene, the latter together with another prominent Denkyera king who equally disliked the Denkyerahere's harsh rule, sent a feeler to Osei Tutu in Kumasi. This feeler was "one chief by name Otchere-Poku whose ancestral stool is the present Atwima-Agogo to intimate to the king that they were making the necessary preparations to come to his ends for full settlement with a large retinue since they very much disliked the despotic rule of the newly enstooled Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari who had then succeeded his uncle Boa Amponsem."[80] Nana Okyere-Poku was very well treated by Osei Tutu, who offered him a place to settle if he too did not wish to go back to Denkyera. He was also given a position at the court as Kra Aminyira--" one of the principle worshippers of the king."[81]

Once settled in Kumasi, Okyere-Poku apparently

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[80] Ibid., p. 2. "Otchere-Poku" is probably Okyere-Poku. Names like this which deviate from accepted Asante spelling will be changed to conform to such spelling format.

[81] Kra means 'soul,' and according to Asante custom the king has attendants who perform certain rituals and ceremonies during specified periods of the year as part of the worship for the king's soul.

sent a positive message to Nana Aware, who left Denkyera soon thereafter. His escape plans leaked to the Denkyerahene, who mobilized some of his army to stop this exodus. He failed because the contingent he mobilized was defeated by Aware and his followers. At first, Aware and his many followers were considered dangerous, but Okomfo Anokye advised that they should be settled at Kwadwo Kurom and that no war should be undertaken against "these immigrants from Denkyera by the king." The area that they initially settled in Kumasi in the late seventeenth century proved to be insufficient for such a large group, and their appeal to Kumasihene for a larger area was met by a new allocation of land on the western end of the city. "The settlers on this land became known as Atwimafuo, meaning the drawers of people from Denkyera. The chief also became known as Atwimahene meaning the chief through whose instrumentality so many people have migrated from Denkyera to serve the King of Ashanti."[82]

This new location was very fertile and the immigrants liked it. It was in this area that Nana Aware died. Before his death, however, he had repaid Osei Tutu's generously by participating in Domaa campaigns, and his son, Ofosuhene Panin, had "settled and explored the present area of Twedie where a great market centre had been established through his initiative" for

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[82]IAS/AS 128.

serving people from the neighboring communities every Friday. Nana Aware also rendered his support in the campaign against his former ruler at Feyiase. Besides, he accompanied Osei Tutu in waging war against those Akim states that had supported the Denkyerahene. His successors were thus royal supporters of Osei Tutu and his succeeding Asantehene.[83]

A contemporary of Nana Aware was Nana Ayeibi, who was probably the leader of the largest group of people ever to have left Denkyera for Kumasi--estimated at 100,000 souls.[84] According to tradition Nana Ayeibi was the Kontirehene of Denkyera, a position next in power only to that of Denkyerahene. The major reason given for his leaving Denkyera was that the king committed adultery with his wife.[85] But the underlying reason was his people's dislike of Gyakari's rule. Gyakari did not take the exodus of so many of his

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[83]Later on, even one of the Asantehene Fredua Agyeman married into Nana Aware's family and begot Owusu Piabiri, who was the seventh Toasehene. Ibid., p. 5.

[84]Atwima Stool History, IAS/AS 184.

[85]This behavior was not sanctioned by Akan custom, whether for people in power or commoners. When it happened, the punishment was very severe, especially if adultery was committed by a man of low rank with the wife of a person of high rank. The penalty sometimes was death. For those in power, the normal punishment was destoolment. Such immoral behavior was one of the reasons given in Kumasi for destoolment of both Asantehene Kofi Karikari and his brother Mensa Bonsu. It is not clear why the Denkyera Kontirehene decided to move to Kumasi instead of trying to engineer the deposition of Ntim Gyakari, especially given the power and the influence of the Kontirehene's position.

subjects willingly: he mobilized some of his loyal troops and attacked Ayeibi at Bepohen village. Fortunately, after a pitched battle Ayeibi defeated his pursuers and preceeded on his way to Kumasi, where he was received with some apprehension by Osei Tutu.[86]

The king suspected that Nana Ayeibi had an ulterior motive for coming to Kumasi, and only after he had told Osei his story in greater detail was he admitted into the kingdom Osei Tutu asked Ayeibi to "appoint one of his blood relatives to stay at his palace who would serve as a bond of fellowship between him the King and he Nana Ayeibi the Krontihene from Denkyera."[87] In response, Nana Ayeibi appointed his nephew, Adu Gyamfi Kumanin. Osei Tutu later appointed Adu to the new stool of Taahyehene, which was a position for "the chief responsible for administering the Golden Pipe, Silver Pipe etc. of the King at his palace."[88] That stool has been occupied ever since by matrilineal descendants of Adu Gyamfi Kumanin, with the consent of both the Asantehene and Atwimahene. Furthermore, the Asantehene appointed "one Otiku Atwedie who was the King's confidential messenger to stay with Nana Ayeibi and his followers from Denkyera." His

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[86]IAS/AS 184.

[87]IAS/AS 184.

[88]Ibid., see also Taahyen Stool History, IAS/AS 185.

function was clearly that of a spy to keep the Asantehene informed of what was happening at Nana Ayeibi's court: "It is said that Otieku Atwedie was to serve as a watch dog of these Denkyira people and to send a confidential report to the King whenever the occasion demanded. King Osei Tutu felt that the Denkyiras were fearful and could rebel against him at any possible moment."[89] Otieku did not live long.

After his death, Nana Ayeibi and his people requested permission to have him buried at their town as a symbol of their union. This request was granted by Osei Tutu. Earlier, Otieku and his followers had joined Osei in his many campaigns against the Domaa, Denkyera and Akim.[90] It seems logical to assume that one major reason why the Denkyerahene lost the battle at Feyiase was that there were present many dissatisfied refugees from Denkyera, for whom Denkyerahene's victory would have been catastrophic. Also, since a good number of his people had left for Kumasi, he presumably had less manpower at his disposal for waging a successful campaign against his adversary--Osei Tutu.

Nineteen miles from Kumasi on the Kumasi-Bekwai road is Abenkyim town, which came under Osei Tutu's influence in a special way. The ruling lineage of this house was closely connected with the Adanse ruling house. The ancestor founder of the Abenkyim stool was

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[89] Ibid.

Nana Nti Akyeampong (also spelled Achampong), the brother of Adansehene.[90] When Nti heard that Osei had been enstooled as the King of Kumasi, he decided to go to visit Kumasi and get acquainted with the new ruler. "The real motive, however, of Nana Achampong's self-introduction was that he was highly pleased on the King's enstoolment as such and had just wanted to cement some relationship between himself and the king."[91] To achieve this end in a friendly and efficient manner, he had brought some gifts for his host. On his way to Kumasi he had stopped at Kwanwum village and given the villagers money to repay an important debt they owed the neighboring Ampabamehene, who would not allow them drinking water. When he had finished his visit to Kumasi and was returning home Adanse-Dampayaase, Nana Akyeampong died in Kwanwum village, where his previous generosity had made him much admired. Fairly close to this village there was a king, Amakyi Nyabia Nkooi, who wished to fight the Denkyerahene without any help from Kumasi. Okomfo Anokye advised that Amakyi should be arrested and tried.

Soon after the trial and condemnation, Nana Nton Nyina, Nti Akyeampong's successor, came to Kumasi and offered to apologize to Osei Tutu so that the proud

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[90] Ibid

[91] Abekyim Stool History, IAS/AS 201.

Amakyi could be released. The events that followed illustrate how, in Akan, a condemned person can have his death sentence commuted, but only by paying a high price in property and territory. "The apology having thus been accepted by the king the death sentence was commuted. As custom demanded, Nana Nton Nyina was asked to buy the head of Amakyi Nyobia Nkooi and to perform the necessary customary rites to that effect."[92] Following the performance of these rites, Amokyi and all his subjects became the subjects of Nana Nton, who was declared the ruler of Abekyim area. Amakyi thereafter, at Osei Tutu's own command, "became the Abontendomhene of Nton Nyina who had then superseded him and had been appointed the Abekyimhene."[93] Thus well before the Denkyera campaign, unpredictable circumstances had brought about the extension of Akyeampong's political fortune with the full consent of Osei Tutu, who was glad to have a stronger ally between Kumasi and Denkyera. Besides, this special ally was of the same lineage as Adansehene, whose power at that time was quite substantial. Nton sided with Osei in the Gyakari war.

Another king who migrated from Denkyera to Kumasi to join Osei Tutu is the Occupant of the Asomfuo (also known as Asomfo Karikari Apaw) stool. The Asomfuohene swears to the Asantehene with the Mpomponsuo sword,

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[92] Ibid. [93] Ibid., p. 4.

and his stool lineage belongs to the Aduana clan. It was created by Osei Tutu for Nana Karikari Apaw, who is "said to have migrated from Denkyera with his followers as a result of the tyrannical administration of the Denkyirahene Ntim Gyakari."[94] When they arrived at Kumasi, they were interviewed by the Akwamuhene to determine their motive for coming and then introduced to the Kumasihene, whom they asked for a place to settle. They were directed to settle at Suntreso about five miles from Kumasi, which they renamed Tanoso after a porcupine bosom which Nana Apaw had brought from Denkyera.[95] He was also made the Ohene of the "large retinue" who had accompanied him to Kumasi. More importantly, and presumably because he possessed the bosom Tanoso, he was appointed the "head of the seven Asumfuo who served at the Asantehene's court as his soul-washers and to serve the King through the Adumhene who runs second to Akwamuhene."[96]

Two stools founded by splinter groups of existing ruling houses were recognized by Osei Tutu as forming

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[94]Asomfuo Stool History, IAS/AS 178.

[95]The correct interpretation of bosom in English is really not 'fetish.' 'Fetish' can be used to refer to several things, such as sorcerers' tools, magical objects or spirits. The kind of bosom that the Akan kept in shrines and consulted regularly for advice could appropriately be called lesser gods. The persons who took care of them are called bosomfuo or okomfuo, which would be loosely translated as 'priests.' One okomfuo whom the writer asked the meaning of bosom, answered, "Oye nyame ketewa," that is, 'he is a small god."

[96]Ibid.

viable political units which he could deal with. The first is Aboabogya stool, which belongs to the Asanie clan and was founded by two brothers, Obiri and Kwajan, who migrated from Amakom community in Kumasi to Kenkaase village on Juaben road.[97] The migration was brought about by family disagreement. These people did not stay at Kankaase for long, but soon moved again to Swedru about two miles from the present Aboabogya village. Osei Tutu recognized the first ruler of this new community, Nana Obiri. During his reign Nana Obiri accompanied Osei Tutu and Opoku Ware in their national campaigns.

The second stool is Sanakora Wono, located seventeen miles on the Kumasi Mampong road through Asoromaso Nkwanta.[98] This stool is within the Gyaase Fekuo under Samanghene. Nana Sakodié Ami, the founder of this stool, was the son of Adu Gyamfi, the King of the Beretuo group which had settled in Wono.[99] Nana Sakodie left his father at Wono after a family conflict and went to explore and settle the Sanakora area.

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[97] Aboabogya Stool History, IAS/AS 121.

[98] Sanankora-Wo-No Stool History, IAS/AS 161.

[99] This is the Adu Gyamfi, who is known in Jamasi tradition as one of the Jamasihene before the Jamasi-Beretuo people finally settled at their present town a few miles from Mampong on the Kumasi Mampong road. Tradition on Adu Gyamfi also provided by Jamisihene and his elders.

Eventually his father, who at this time was fairly influential, may have "made negotiations for the settlement on this place and a parcel of land for his son through the Asantehene."[100] This is possible because a fellow clansman of Adu Gyamfi, the Mamponghene, was reputedly very powerful at this time. It seems conceivable that the Kumasihene Osei Tutu, if he or his ally the Antoahene controlled this area, could have given such a small concession to build a political good will with Beretuo clansmen.[101] The concession could also have been given in exchange for Sakodie's support in the Domaa campaign, which we know from tradition that he participated in: "Nana Sorkodie Ami is said to have taken part in the Domaa war fought in the reign of King Osei Tutu in which the Domaahene was defeated at Abesim and the commander-in-chief of the Domaa army captured and beheaded by the Ashantis."[102] He was also one of the fighters in the Gyakori Akim wars, and his brother successor, Nana Nontwi, accompanied Opoku Ware in many campaigns.

During this early period, Kumasi established her link with some emerging rulers by supporting their

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[100] Ibid., p. 3.

[101] Sanakora Wono was just adjacent to Antoa town. Antoahene at this time was a fairly influential figure in Kumasi politics.

[102] Ibid.

struggles. This relationship is exemplified by Juansa stool history. The founder of this stool, Nana Kodie, was an Oyoko clansman who migrated from Kokofu and settled at Juansa--not far from Juaben. On his way he had stopped at Kumasi and apparently established friendly contacts with the ruler of that state, which was to provide important help later. At the new settlement Nana Kodie encountered opposition from "a very powerful ruler, called Ahantahene, within the vicinity of Juansa, who refused entry to Nana Kodie and his retinue."[103] Although Nana Kodie was a King of Anuro before the beginning of this migration, he was not militarily able to defeat his opponent. Hence it was natural for him to appeal to Osei Tutu for military aid. The result was that: "Nana Osei Tutu sent reinforcements to combat this chief of the Ahanta, and the Ahantahene was consequently captured and decapitated."[104] Soon after the defeat of Ahantahene the Gyakari war commenced, and Nana Kodie's important role in it as Asantehene's gun-powder carrier enhanced his stool and earned him a political reward when the Asantehene raised his "stature to an Obirempong." The significance of the Juansa-Kumasi axis was the mutual support that prevailed between them: Nana Kodie had an ally whom he could call upon, and Osei Tutu could trust this colleague to side with him in battle.

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[103] IAS/AS 61. [104] Ibid.

Some stool holders were attracted to an alliance with Osei Tutu by their extreme patriotism. They had exhibited this patriotism before the Denkyera war. The founder of Kwaso ruled his town--eighteen miles from Kumasi on the Accra road--independently; his group had immigrated there from Asantemanso in Esumegya.[105] One of the earlier Kwasohene, Nana Nontwiri, supported the Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa against the Domaa; and at the time of Osei Tutu, Nontwiri's younger brother, Adu Agyei, offered his life for the Asante national cause. Before the Feyiase battle, Okomfo Anokye had a vision telling him that the Asante should sacrifice two sons of royal lineages. The candidates for this purpose were to be volunteers. So Adu Agyei and a Kumawu royal, Tweneboa Kodua, according to tradition "made themselves a sacrifice to the nation whereby they were killed in cold blood at a constituted meeting of the nation."[106] In recognition of this supreme act of selflessness, the Asantehene decreed that the descendants of these two families should never "suffer the capital sentence of the nation even though the offense thus committed was murder or felony under the Ashanti customary law."[107] Thus Nana Nantwiri not only

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[105]Before these people settled at Kwaso they had lived temporarily at Apomase and Deduako. Kwaaso Stool History, IAS/AS 123.

[106]Ibid. [107]Ibid.

identified his stool with the liberation struggle but was also ready to do anything to strengthen it--a dedication which no doubt was welcomed by Osei Tutu and the other Ahene.

The Ahene who had rendered vital service to the Asantehene enhanced their stool status through this service, which was rewarded by Osei Tutu. Amakye Bari stool is an example of this. The ancestor of this stool, Gyedu Kumanin, was from Akim and related to Okyenhene in that area. He had migrated to his present village, thirteen miles from Kumasi on the Abrapo road, after a family struggle over the ownership of Sika Pesewa jewellery. When he left Akim, giving up his right as Okyen stool-heir, he brought his sister Afuatuo and his retinue. After the customary exchange of courtesies with the Kumasihene, Obiri Yeboa, Gyedu settled down; later the Kumasihene made Gyedu "responsible for keeping of one of the household keys at the King's court."[108] Gyedu also acted as a carrier for a special ritual stone which was regularly conveyed between the court and Bantama. Further, he had entrusted to him an important ritual role for the Asante state. According to tradition,

> He was entrusted with a special porcupine or fetish called Sanye which was made of iron and used for the administration of the pouring of libation. The Amakye Barihene it is said in the old days got up before dawn each day and thence poured

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[108] Amakye Bari Stool History, IAS/AS 175.

> the necessary libation. . . . The incantation of the fetish Sanye was . . . first to pray to the ancestral gods for the long life and prosperity of the King and secondly to pour libation for the welfare and good government of the state.[109]

The ancestor of another stool, Koraase, was Nana Tawia, the sister of Osei Tutu's faithful servant Okra Amponsem. When Osei was in Denkyera, Okra was one of his servants. Osei impregnated Denkyerahene's sister, making it necessary for him to run away at night. He took Okra Anposem with him to Akwamu and ultimately to Kumasi. Following Osei Tutu's installation as the Asantehene, Nana Amponsem "was made a soul-worshipper at his palace or court."[110] At the conclusion of the final Domaa campaign, in which Osei Tutu was the victor, Nana Okra Amponsem "was appointed the Kyidomhene of Kumasi (chief of the rearguard of the King) and was made to reside at Ankaase, a town which is now attached to the Kyidom stool."[111] Thus he was a soul-washer and Kyidomhene concurrently. Later on, at the recommendation of Okomfo Anokye, Osei also gave his sister, Tawia, the "caretakership of the fetish Taa Dwemo." She became the new guardian of this fetish.

Finally there were a few stools which were founded at the time of Osei Tutu and connected to him through marriage. One of these stools is Adwumfuohene,

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[109] Ibid., p. 3.

[110] Koraase Stool History, IAS/AS 159.

[111] Ibid.

or the Asantehene's chief goldsmith. This is an ancestral family stool and its occupant swears the enstoolment oath to the Asantehene with the Mpomponsuo sword. It was created by Osei Tutu for his brother-in-law Nana Agyare, whom he had met at the Denkyera court. According to tradition

> . . . when Osei Tutu left Denkyera uncermoniously for Akwamu as a result of Abena Bensua's pregnancy, he eloped with two women, namely Kwakye Anema and Baabo, said to be relatives or ancestresses of Nana Agyare, the Adwumfuohene-to-be of Asantehene, Nana Osei Tutu. It is said that these women were lovers of King Osei Tutu whilst at Denkyera. . . .[112]

One day, however, when Nana Agyare could not find his sisters at their house, a young man informed him that they had been taken by Prince Osei Tutu. He gathered some of his followers and ordered them to follow Osei Tutu in an attempt to rescue his sisters. But this proved useless, as Osei and his lovers were well beyond Offin river, where the pursuers learned that Osei had "already crossed the river with two beautiful women." They returned to Denkyera and informed the Denkyerahene and Nana Agyare. Later Nana Agyare asked the Denkyerahene for permission to go to Kumasi to look for his sisters: ". . . he left Denkyera with a retinue of 1,500 people and got to a certain village called Apaase in Atwima area. From Apaase they called at the present area of Kumasi which was formally known as Kwamang. At

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[112]IAS/AS 13. Nana Agyare was Denkyerahene's chief goldsmith before he came to Kumasi.

Kumasi they called on Nana Awere, the Asafohene of Kumasi, now known as Akwamuhene of Kumasi. Chief Awere directed them to the house of Nana Asantehene Osei Tutu, who was then the reigning monarch."[113]

When Nana Agyare met Osei Tutu, he asked him why he had eloped with his sisters without telling him. Osei answered that he had done so because he suspected that Nana Agyare would not have allowed him to leave with his sisters. Osei felt that, now that Nana Agyare had come to Kumasi, he should forget the elopement affair, accept Osei as his brother-in-law and accept a stool in the Asante government. Realizing the futility of further argument, as well as the advantages of joining the Kumasi government, Nana Agyare "agreed to the king's request and was given a place to stay with his retinue." He was made the king of his retinue and "became a prominent citizen of Kumasi and the Adwumfuohene of Asantehene."[114] His main responsibilities were decorating the golden stool and making stool regalia such as rings, stools and golden sandals for Asantehene.[115]

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[113] Ibid. At this time Osei was Kumasihene, as the Asante union and the Gyakari war had not taken place.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Osei Tutu was not the only Asantehene to marry from this house. Asantehene Fredua Agyeman married Nana Konadu and begot Aheneba Boakye Dankwa, who was Adwumfuohene for a long time. Ibid., p. 4.

Twafuo stool was also established by Osei Tutu for his brother-in-law Kofi Buafuo.[116] When Osei was in Denkyera we learn from tradition that Nana Akyempim was one of his wives. She was the daughter of the Denkyerahene Boa Amposem and the sister of Denkyera Twafuohene (chief of the advance guard) Nana Fosu Buafuo. As Osei left Denkyera at night, this wife did not learn his whereabouts until later, when news reached Denkyera that some Kumasi noblemen had been sent to Akwamu to get Osei Tutu to come to Kumasi to inherit the highest vacant stool in that city. According to tradition "at a subsequent date his deserted wife Nana Akyempim, who was in Denkyera, heard of this glorious news of her husband. Consequently she migrated with her brothers Nana Fosu Buafuo, the Twafuohene or Advance-guard chief of the King of Denkyera, and a large retinue. Nana Esumin, the nephew of Nana Fosu Buafuo, was also one of the immigrants from Denkyera."[117]

Nana Buafuo, however, did not reach Kumasi but died at a small village, Mmedoma, in Adanse on their migration route. Nana Esumin succeeded his uncle and led the group to Kumasi, where they arrived at Dadesoaba "with a large retinue, guns, ancestral stool,

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[116] Twafuo Stool History, IAS/AS 165.

[117] Ibid.

etc."[118] Osei Tutu was glad to learn of their arrival, and especially that of his wife Nana Akyempim, who was also happy to rejoin her husband. Some political changes ensued to accommodate Osei's in-laws in Kumasi political structure. The Kumasi Twafuo stool at that time was occupied by Nana Kwame Asua, a contemporary of Obiri Yeboa and a veteran of the Domaa wars. But according to tradition, "Nana Esumin from Denkyera was, however, appointed the Twafuohene of Kumasi through the initiative of King Osei Tutu. He was the first Twafuohene of Osei Tutu and took part in the Domaa war fought at Abesim in which the Domaahene was defeated."[119] In his capacity of Twafuohene, Nana Esumin was responsible for firing the first shots at the enemy before the war began. By so doing, he gave the alarm for the rest of the army and specifically the Akwamu-Kronti division to which he was attached. He performed this role at Feyiase battle and his successors did the same thing in the Tekyiman Gyaman, Akim and Banda wars for Osei Tutu's successors.

The third stool in this category is Oti Kurom, which was established by Osei Tutu for his son Oti Aware after the decisive Asante Denkyera battle at Feyiase. The ancestress of this stool, Nana Abuno Nyankopong, a member of Eduana clan, migrated from Asumegya-Asantemanso area to Kumasi before the Denkyera

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[118] Ibid., p. 2. [119] Ibid.

war to join her husband.[120] She migrated with a large contingent of her followers and her ancestral stool. She died shortly after her arrival in Kumasi, even before bearing any children. As ayete custom required, her sister Nana Ayodeneho "thus succeeded her and became the King's wife." From this union was born a boy, Oti Aware, whom Osei Tutu was so happy to have that he wanted to take him to the coming war with Gyakari. Thus,

> the King it is said whilst taking the field for war appealed to his wife Nana Ayedeneho that although his son Oti Aware was then a minor, it was his wish that he accompany him to the battlefield. Nana Ayedeneho thus acceded to her husband's request the King it is said created a stool for his son which stool became known as Oti Aware stool.[121]

When the campaign ended Nana Ayedeneho was given land to settle with her son at Fabaware, but they moved from this area, after the death of Ayedeneho's sister, to their present town which was named after Oti Aware. Both Oti and his mother died here after the stool was well established and their followers had started to increase.

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[120] Ofori Kurom Stool History, IAS/AS 163. According one version of the tradition she "was a wife of Osei Tutu whilst resident at Asantemanso." However, this seems unlikely because we do not have any tradition indicating that Osei lived at Asantemanso or that Nana Abuno ever came to Kumasi and married Osei. One suggestion would be that Nana Abuno's family was the ayete of Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa, and that Nana Abuno was designated as Osei Tutu's future wife.

[121] Ibid.

In the next two centuries this stool was occupied by people who were the relatives of the Asantehene. Oti's successor was his brother Oheneba Osu Apaw in the time of Asantehene Opoku Ware and Osei Kwadwo. Then the stool was inherited by his nephew Ase Panin, who ruled from the time of Osei Kwadwo through the era of Bonsu Panin. Ase was succeeded by his brother Okoo (both Ase and Okoo were the grandsons of Osei Tutu), who ruled for a short time and then was succeeded by another brother, Kofi Kokoo, during the same era. Kofi died about 1825 and was succeeded by his brother Nana Seifa, who remained on the stool until the time of Asantehene Fredua Agyeman. The next five successors to this stool were all grandsons of the Asantehene, until Oheneba Yaw Afriiye succeeded to the throne after the destoolment of Oti Kuromhene Nana Frimpong for maladministration during Asante civil war of the 1880's.[122] Oheneba Yaw Afriiye's mother was an ayete wife from this house married to Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto. The inheritors of Afriiye were all his nephews or grandsons of the Asantehene Osei Yaw Okoto. Oheneba Yaw continued the tradition that had been established by his predecessors: That of rendering support in Asante wars and

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[122] Ibid., p. 3. The five grandsons were Nana Gyan Mensa; Nana Agyei Boahen; Nana Kwakye, who accompanied Adu Bofuo in the Hwem war, in which Ramseyer and Kuhne were captured; Nana Bonefoo and Nana Frimpong.

administration during peace time. During his rule he took part in Nkoranza campaign--the last major war undertaken by the Asante before the exile of Prempeh I and the coming of colonial rule.[123]

The fourth stool that we shall concern ourselves with is Okyerekrom, located in a village about nine miles from Kumasi on the Accra road. The occupant of this stool swears to the Asantehene with the Mpomponsuo sword, belongs to the Ekuona clan and is within the Gyase division in Kumasi political organization. This stool is generally referred to as the Okyere and Boadi stool, after the first two rulers to occupy it. The ancestress of the stool, Nana Kyerewa Amposem, was a Denkyera woman married to Osei Tutu: "The King is believed to have got married to Nana Kyerewa Amponsem while undergoing a training of kingship at the Denkyerehene's court. . . . On King Osei Tutu's installation as the Omanhene of Kumasi Nana Kyerewa Amponsem then came to Kumasi Kwamang to live with her beloved husband."[124] Nana Kyerewa left Denkyera with her followers, stopped at Kokofu for a while, and then proceeded to Aboatem, where some of the retinue remained while the rest continued to Abosom (near the present campus of the University of Science and Technology).

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[123]Claridge, op. cit., II, pp. 361-64.

[124]Okyerekrom Stool History, IAS/AS 206, pp. 2-3.

Here they settled until the village was declared "an unsuitable area for the residence of the King's wife." When Nana Kyerewa died childless, her sister Nana Adoma "who was a full blood relative was appointed by the King to succeed Nana Kyerewa Amponsem as his wife."[125]

Nana Adoma and her followers moved to Asokore-Mampong temporarily before they finally settled at their present town, then known as Hemang. This name, however, was changed to Okyerekrom or the town of Okyere--the brother of Nana Kyerewa Amponsem who explored this area before he settled there. Nana Okyere not only was an active Asante administrator--the first Ohene of this town--but also participated in Asante military affairs, supporting Osei Tutu against the Domaahene Kusi, Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari and Akimhene. When Okyere died during the era of Asantehene Opoku Ware, he was succeeded by his brother Nana Boadi, who also provided Opoku Ware with both political and military support.[126] Boadi died at the time of Asantehene Kusi Buadum and was succeeded by his brother Kotineboa, who ruled until the time of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo.

As we shall see later, these were not the only marriages that Osei Tutu contracted that had significant political impact. But what is noteworthy about them is that marriages were an important means of establishing a web of kinship which could be used for the mutual

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[125] Ibid., p. 3. [126] Ibid., p. 6.

benefit of the two families so united. The marriages also reveal Osei Tutu's desire to use those of his brothers-in-law who had administrative or technical knowledge (such as Adwumfuohene and Twafuohene) at Denkyera to provide his young state with experienced personnel. As for these new administrators, they too stood to gain in the course of Asante development: there was much unsettled land in and around Kumasi.[127]

The traditions of other immigrants who had moved to Kumasi region during the time of Oti Akenten, Obiri Yeboa and Osei Tutu reveal a desire for some unrestricted frontier open to unlimited development.[128] Life in Denkyera, Adanse, Asantemanso Akim or Kibi was limited by the kings who were well established there, and who demanded service, tribute, and taxes from their subjects. When their subjects rejected some or all of these demands, the alternative to repression was migration north beyond the king's reach. In the course of these migrations, a common discontent formed the basis of sympathy and understanding, so that when two or more

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[127]Many of the traditions of the stool founders have an explorer who prospected new areas where settlements could be established. See also Busia, op. cit., p. 46.

[128]One of the major reasons mentioned often in traditions for migrating from an older settlement to a new one was that the settlers felt "hemmed in" or that there was insufficient land. Tradition provided by Mampong stool historians, Jamasihene and Apaahene and their elders. See also IAS/AS 171.

migrant lineages met, they helped each other. Sometimes contracting marriages strengthened their bonds within the village or among dispersed villages or towns. Kumasi, which was located on the north-south trade route, gained prominence early, and this, together with the shrewd and tactful approach of her rulers towards the other migrants, facilitated the spread of her prestige as a desirable place to live.

The traditions of the stools so far discussed in this chapter indicate that the policy of the Kumasi rulers towards their affiliates was clearly that of primus inter pares. The abosuadwa stool succession was not tampered with: in fact, most of the evidence seems to reveal that the migrating lineages whose heads had been Ahene of their small or large retinues continued to occupy the same positions politically and militarily even after their arrival in Asante. Perhaps the major reason for this continuation was that these political units were self-sufficient, except in case of attack, when one unit sought alliance with another. The Kumasihene's power did not develop significantly until towards the end of the Domaa power at the close of the seventeenth century. The power that it enjoyed until then was based primarily on kinship ties with its allies who had migrated to the same area. These allies were related either through family, marriages, a common area of origin (such as

Asantemanso or Adanse), or dislike of the southern rulers from whose countries the migrations had originated. By the time Osei Tutu came back from Denkyera via Akwamu, these loosely-related political units were feeling a desire to unite, to liberate themselves entirely from the Denkyerahene, whose rule was still a significant nuisance.

But this feat could not easily be accomplished by one or even by a few of these units. A united front was essential from the moment that the Juabenhene threw rocks into the brass pan sent by Denkyerehene Ntim Gyakari for the Asante to fill with gold as his tribute.[129] The traditions of several stools whose founders had left Denkyera to escape Denkyerahene's rule indicate the seriousness with which these states viewed the possibility that Denkyera might rule over them. Several of these states had already fought Gyakari's army, which tried to stop them from migrating north. The abosuadwa stool leaders strengthened their bonds by further marriages (such as the one between Mampong-hene and Osei Tutu's sister), ritual ceremonies performed by Okomfo Anokye, and even blood sacrifices of the members of the Ejisu and Kumawu royal families, in

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[129]As he threw the rocks, he announced defiantly that the Asante people would not pay the required tribute. The other Ahene concurred with this view by doing the same. Tradition provided by Nana Owasu Ansah and several elders in Asante.

the hope that the independence so much desired would be finally won. Once the danger from Denkyera was eliminated, it was also difficult to disband the political and military organizations that had accomplished such a feat. However, the effect of these two institutions on the stool history and structure was profound, as we shall see. By this time there were barely any non-abosuadwa stools. The ohenemmadwa, the esomdwa/mmammadwa, and the adehyemmadwa, to which we shall turn our attention in the following chapter, hardly existed.

CHAPTER V

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF STOOLS. II

In the preceding chapter we looked into the origins of the abosuadwa or adehyedwa stools and of those who occupied them in the seventeenth century and early in Osei Tutu's period, so as to understand the origins of the people who ruled Asante during the formative years. In this chapter our concern will be mainly to investigate further significant stool developments during the rest of Osei Tutu's period and later. The exigencies of the new Asante confederate government called for administrative reforms involving modification of the abosuadwa stool structure or succession to accommodate monarchical pressures; development of new kinds of stools with different succession patterns designed to meet political, bureaucratic and military requirements; and strengthening of the traditional bonds that had brought together the petty Asante states within a few miles of Kumasi. This chapter is intended to give us a better idea of what type of individuals the stool system provided for conducting Asante administration.

Development of Ahenemmadwa Stools

Abosuadwa or adehyedwa stools are clearly distinguishable from the other stools by their chief characteristic of limiting occupiers to matrilineal descendant. The non-abosuadwa stools do not have such a well-defined feature. The occupation of ahenemmadwa stools is ideally restricted to sons and grandsons. However, in practice there is deviation from this norm, especially when nephews or grandnephews become eligible for these stools.[1] In that case, depending on the frequency of nephew-grandnephew or son-grandson occupancy, the stool was considered "owned" by the family that provided the nephews or grandnephews. In ahenemmadwa stools the non-nephews or grand nephews who occupied the stools were often related to sons or grandsons of the Ohene, due to the ayete system. There are two important things to consider in this regard. First, stools were sometimes created by the Ohene for a brother-in-law or for the son of an Ohene.[2]

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[1]The word nana means grandchild when used to refer to a younger person in relationship to an older one. When used to refer to an older person it means grandparent. Often, however, it is used as a term of address or title denoting honor and respect for older people in general or people in a hierarchically higher position. But there is no specific term that is in general use to differentiate the grandchild referred to: paternal or maternal grandchild, that is, grandnephew. See also Rattray, who indicates that the term nana is used for 'son's son' as well as 'sister's daughter's son.' Ashanti, op. cit., p. 26.

[2]Often the families of these brothers-in-law or sons already had stools, and with the marriage came

Second, other stools were created for an Ohene's faithful servant (e.g., Boakye Yam stool), and when this servant died his son or brother was chosen as successor to the stool. Only in a few cases were successors to ahenemmadwa stools complete strangers. Eventually this custom led the stool family to consider the stool (or office) as a family possession.

The evidence seems to indicate that the ahenemmadwa stools, with some qualifications, were family stools. These stools were entrusted to individuals closely related to the first occupant, partly in order to ensure the continued loyalty of the new officers to the state or to the Ohene. The king could trust his sons or brothers-in-law or their descendants, either matrineally or patrilineally. Sometimes the king preferred his sons for administrative positions to persons coming from other stools. This preference was due to the devotion and loyalty that sons customarily showed to their fathers. Thus when Oheneba Sabin Panyin, the first Akyeampimhene and the son of Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa, so courageously defended his father and finally brought him home mortally wounded, this dedication was recognized by Osei Tutu. Upon arriving in Kumasi and hearing the story, he proclaimed that "the son is of great significance" or "oba, na

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recognition and elevation in status. Osei Tutu contracted several marriages of this kind.

asem."[3] Osei Tutu trusted Akyeampimhene Sabin Panyin so much that he gave him the responsibility of raising his own son, Oheneba Owusu Afriyie.[4]

The family of Akyeampimhene is one of Otumfuo's ayete and it is apparently from the sons of this marriage that new Akyeampimhene are recruited. Asantehene Osei Kwame married into this house and begot Oheneba Owusu Ansa, for whom he created another ahenemmadwa stool, Atipin. Asantehene continued marrying into this house and their sons have continued occupying this stool. The mother of the present Akyeampimhene, Nana Boakye Dankwa, was also from the same house, and Nana Boakye occupied the Atipin Stool for a long time before he was finally given the Akyeampim stool in 1947.[5]

The creation and occupation of Hia stool illustrates another similarity to Akyeampim stool.[6] The first Hiahene, Oheneba Kra Sabin Domse, was a paternal brother of Akyeampimhene Sabin Panyin. His stool name, Hia, comes from the Asante Twi word ehia, which means essential or indispensable, and suggests why Osei Tutu created this stool for Kumasihene Obiri Yeboa's son.

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[3]Akyeampim Stool History, IAS/AS 106, p. 4.

[4]Oheneba Owusu, who succeeded Sabin as the Akyeampimhene later went to Accra to negotiate with the Danes at Christiansborg Castle on behalf of Asante during Opoku Ware's reign in 1742. Ibid., p. 9.

[5]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[6]Hia Stool History, IAS/AS 154.

Both Sabin Panyin and Sabin Kuma[7] were put into the Kyidom fekuo or the army's rearguard contingent, with Akyeampimhene as first and his younger brother as second in command.[8] During the Asante Akyim war, when Opoku Ware learned that Abiri Moro, the Sefwihene, had attacked Kumasi and taken much booty and many royal captives, he entrusted the task of releasing these captives to Hiahene and Akwaboahene of Bantama fekuo.[9] This mission was important and definitely indicates the degree to which Opoku Ware could trust the sons connected with the Golden Stool.[10]

Eligibiility for occupancy of this stool is closely tied to the establishment of ayete relationship

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[7]Oheneba Kra Sabin Domse was the full stool name given to Oheneba Sabin Kuma when a stool was created for him.

[8]Hia Stool History, op. cit., p. 2.

[9]Among the royal captives was the Asantehemaa Nana Nyaako Kusiamoa, Opoku Ware's mother. The word Abirimoro, according to the Hia stool historian, is a combination of two names: Abiri, the king of Aowin, and Moro, the name of Abiri's son; Ibid., p. 3. However, other sources indicate the whole word Abirimoro is the name of the Sefwi king.

[10]According to both Akyeampim and Bantama stool history, Opoku Ware did not directly appoint Hiahene to pursue Abirimoro; rather, this was done by Akyeampimhene and Bantamahene, who had been asked to undertake the mission. Both of these Ahene declined to leave Opoku Ware in Akim. Instead, they sent their deputies after Abirimoro. But we could confidently conclude that Opoku Ware concurred with their decision. Otherwise, he would have urged that they go. This was a very important task, as Opoku Ware's own mother was a captive. See also Akyeampim and Bantama stool histories, op. cit.

between the successors to the Golden Stool and the Hia family. According to tradition Nana Sabin Kuma was the second son of Obiri Yeboa and his wife Nana Adwoa Bamii, a niece of a prominent Denkyerahene Nana Daku-Mensa who had migrated to Asante with over a thousand followers. The Asantehene eventually created stools for Nana Adwoa and her mother, Abaa Panin Akua Broni, thereby making them Ahene and legitimizing the ayete relationship and the families from which future Hiahene were to be recruited:

> The relatives of Nana Darko-Mensah and Akua Broni have hitherto been succeeding to the two stools in succession, both as Hia Obaapanin, and Asantehene's (Aryiteh) wife's stools respectively. An instance of this was Obaapanin Akua Mensah, a descendant to the said Nana Darko-Mensah and Akua Broni of Botentia, was married as (Ayiteh) by the late Asantehene Nana Fredua Agyeman (i.e., Kwaku dua I), and bore with her the late Hiahene Nana Boakye Adade I.[11]

Thus this ayete relationship ensured that the Obaapanin of this stool would always be related to the Asantehene and in a position to influence Hia stool politics. First, the Obaapanin or stool Ohemaa is traditionally an important political activist, having the power to appoint (up to three times) a new candidate for succession to the stool. Second, she would be a good link with the Asantehene by providing necessary information or exerting pressure during the Hia stool court proceedings where she sat close to Hiahene. Third, she

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[11] Ibid., pp. 10-11. Note that the spelling of ayete in this quote is anglicized.

was in a position to influence the Hiahene both as her son or nephew, and as his political advisor. According to Asante custom the Obaa Panin or the Ohemaa is expected to give the Ohene good advice, and if she fails both of them can be destooled. This connection is clear from the unwritten rule that restricted the succession to this stool to the sons and grandnephews of Obaa Panin. Although this stool was theoretically open to any sons or grandsons of the Asantehene, this provision was made only "in case there could not be found any suitable person in the family circle of Nana Sabin Domse, the very first Prince, for whom the Hia stool was originally created."[12] Thus, although Hia stool is ahenemmadwa inasmuch as Nana Sabin Domse's family believes that it is a stool for their maternal sons or grandsons, we could confidently interpret this belief as a claim to stool succession based on a concept that is very similar to abosuadwa stool. The major difference here, however, is that the successors have to be the sons of those royal females of this stool who are married to the Asantehene only.[13] It would seem that

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[12] Ibid., p. 10.

[13] In Kyidom stool, however, sons of Asantehene's sons would be eligible, but apparently not sons of Asantehene's daughters--another notable difference (see Kyidom Stool IAS/AS 158). And in Atipin stool, sons of daughters of Asantehene are eligible. For example Atipinhene Saabene was the son of Nana Akua Afriiye, the daughter of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu. Tradition provided by Atipinhene and his elders.

sons of royal females who are married to other people would also be eligible for the stool, since they are within the same "family circle of Nana Sabin Domse." But it would also seem that preference was given to sons of the royals married to Otumfuo. This would form the basis of the second difference between this type of stool and abosuadwa stools. In the latter, succession is not restricted to sons borne by royals married to a particular kind of husband. The only prerequisite in this case is that a stool candidate must prove his matrilineal genealogical connection with the family for which the stool was created.

Akyeampim and Hia stools are not unique. The history and genealogies of both Kyidom and Atipin stools provide interesting and essential information about the nature of the ahenemmadwa stools. Kyidom, or Ankaase, is the village fifteen miles north east of Kumasi where the Kyidomhene are burried. Its stool is traditionally described as of "both matrilineal and patrilineal descent. Matrilineally it belongs to the Beretuo clan, but patrilineally also it belongs to the sons of the stool and the sons of the Golden Stool as well."[14] The occupant of this stool ranks second in command to Akyeampimhene in the Kyidom fekuo.[15] He

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[14]Kyidom stool history, IAS/AS 158, p. 1.

[15]According to Hia stool history, Kyidomhene used to rank next to Hiahene within the same fekuo, until the time of Asantehene Yow Akoto, when the latter

swears loyalty, allegiance, etc. to the Asantehene with the Mpomponsuo sword. Kyidom stool was created by the first Asantehene as a reward to his faithful servant Nana Okra Amponsem who, according to tradition, overheard secret plans to prosecute Osei Tutu for impregnating Gyakari's daughter and told Osei so that he could flee. He faithfully accompanied Osei to Akwamu and finally to Kumasi, where he and Amankwatia were given stools on the same day.

It is noteworthy that this stool was created on the same day as Bantama stool. Both were created at the advice of Okomfo Anokye and for two of Osei Tutu's most trusted servants. The creation of both stools was inspired by militray considerations: the impending war with Denkyera, and the intimate knowledge both men had of the Denkyera power and court. It was not accidental that the founding of these offices was also influenced by considerations as to who could be trusted to lead the newly organized army. Bantamahene was designated the overall commander of the Kumasi army,[16] while Nana Okra Amponsem was made commander of the

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could not pay an £80 war tax and asked Kyidomhene for help. Kyidomhene paid the debt, but demanded that he receive Hiahene's post. This was mutually agreed upon, but has since been a source of discontent. Hiahene wants to repay Kyidomhene and resume his higher position. But Ankaasehene has not agreed to this IAS/AS 154, pp. 7-9.

[16]See IAS/AS 39-40.

rear-guard division charged with guarding the king in battle. Nana Okra Amponsem, the only son of his mother, outlived Osei Tutu to the time of Opoku Ware. As there was no other adult member of Amponsem's family to succeed him, the Otumfuo appointed Gyase Kuo, also a member of Amponsem's retinue from Denkyera, to the Kyidom stool.[17] The stool remained within Gyase Kuo's family for almost a century, and again the pattern of succession does not indicate that it was open to anyone else (except, of course, in extreme cases, as after Amponsem's death). The third, fourth and fifth men to occupy the stool were all descendants of Amoa. Bafuo Yamoa was the son of Nana Gyase and his wife Yaa Ntiwa; Bafuo Anti Kusi, who ruled for forty days, was the son of Bafuo Yamoa;[18] and Bafuo Gyasi Tintin was also the son of Yamoa. During his reign the war between Gyamanhene Adinkra Kofi and Asantehene broke out, when the golden stool that Adinkra had made for himself was requested by his overlord, the Asantehene.[19] Nana Gyase

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[17]IAS/AS 158, pp. 5-6. Gyase Kuo's mother, Nana Fosua Morunowaa, had also migrated to Kumasi from Denkyera. Tradition provided by Kyidomhene stool historians: Nana Kwaku Adee formerly Akwamuhene of Ankaase stool, Nana Kwasi Sekyere, Kontirehene of the same stool. Also present was Opanin Kwaku Fokuo, the Ankaase Akwamuhene.

[18]Kyidomhene Bafuo Yamoa married a royal of Juaben, which contributed to strengthening the politico-kinship ties between Kumasi and Juaben oman. Ibid.

[19]The Asantehene, Osei Bonsu, felt that he was the only one in the whole Asante empire who had the

Tintin could not go to war, and since the Asantehene needed a Kyidomhene to accompany him in the Gyaman campaign, he appointed Oheneba Banahene to this post.

Oheneba Banahene represents an important departure in Kyidom stool politics. Well before the Gyaman war, Asantehene Osei Kwadwo had married Afua Kwakwaa, the sister of Gyase Tintin, and from his union was born Oheneba Banahene.[20] From this time on, successors to this stool were, in theory, no longer restricted to Yamoa's descendants. From the time of Banahene's accession, the eligibility to occupy this stool was extended to sons and grandsons of the Asantehene. This paradoxical change may be explained in several ways. First, since Banahene was Asantehene's son, if any of Banahene's descendants occupied the stool in the future, he would be doubly qualified, first as Asantehene's Ohenenana, and second as a relative of Yamoa. For example, Kyidomhene Bafuo Kwadwo Ofinaman, who was Asantehene Osei Bonsu's contemporary, was Yamoa's sister's son.[21] Kofi Sekyere's mother,

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right to possess a golden stool. When he heard of Adinkra's golden stool, he sent Okyeame Butuakwa to get it. The accounts of what followed, though conflicting, generally agree that war broke out soon after this incident. Information provided by Akyeame Bafuo Akoto and Penyaa.

[20]Tradition provided by Kyidom stool historians, op. cit.

[21]Tradition provided by Kyidom stool historians. It is interesting to note that this descent is abosua.

Abenaa Aso, was also from Ankaase. Kyidomhene Kwame Boateng, who succeeded to the stool in the mid-1890's, was not only a descendant of Bafuo Yamoa but also the son of Akwamuhene Boakye Tenten, the second husband of Asantehemaa Yaa Akua.[23] Ama Sewaa, Boateng's sister, married Kwaku Fe, and she bore Kwaku Boateng, who became Kyidomhene when Prempeh returned from exile in 1924. This descent, similar to that of Kyidomhene Bafuo Kwadwo Ofinaman, substantiates the fact that ahenemmadwa stools were not restricted only to paternal grandsons, but also extended to grandnephews.[24] Finally, Kyidomhene Atta Kwadwo, the eighteenth Ohene, was the son of Nana Ohenamang, the grandson of Oheneba Banahene.[25]

Second, most of the remaining Kyidomhene were the sons of Asantehene. Although there are several of these Kyidomhene whose mothers' names are not recalled

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[22]According to one tradition she was a member of the family of the first Kyidomhene, Nana Amponsem.

[23]Tradition given by Kyidom stool historians, Asantehemaa and Akwamuhene and his elders. See also IAS/AS 158, p. 8.

[24]The reason cited for giving the stool to Kwaku Boateng was that Otumfuo did this in recognition of the service rendered to him by his uncle Kwame Boateng. But this is not the sole reason, especially when we take into consideration the genealogical factors. One of the sons of Kwame Boateng is Nana Agyeman Paul Boateng, who has been the private secretary of the Asantehene for a long time.

[25]Tradition provided by Kyidom stool historians.

in tradition, there is some evidence that they come from Ankaase, where the Asantehene apparently had established ayete relationship at the time of Osei Kwadwo's marriage with Nana Afua Kwakwaa. Oheneba Kofi Adwene, the thirteenth ruler of this stool, was from Ankaase, where Asantehene Kwaku Dua I had married two wives.[26] Besides as Ankaase is the village where all the dececeased Kyidomhene are interred, according to tradition that requires that one be buried next to his family members on the matrilineal line, we can confidently conclude that this fact limited the choices to sons or grandsons of Asantehene with ayete wives married from Ankaase.

Third, modifying the succession could be seen as Asantehene Osei Bonsu's attempt to exert more influence on this stool. When an Ohene dies in Asante, his superior is entitled to ayibuadie or death duty, which is a certain percentage of the deceased Ohene's property. According to one tradition, one of the Kyidomhene[27] acquired so much gold from his trade in

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[26]Tradition provided by Kyidom stool historians.

[27]Bafuo Yamoa, although it would seem more like Gyasi Tintin for two reasons. First, because it was after his reign that Oheneba Banahene came. Second, traditions about his last days on the throne are conflicting. One states that he became blind before the Adinkra war, so he could not take part in the campaign, either because he was destooled or because he abdicated. The other tradition states that "this chief was destooled by the Ankaase people because of incapacitation." IAS/AS 158, p. 6.

kola nuts from Ankaase to Daboya that he bragged about it to the Asantehene. As the present Kyidomhene Oheneba Osei Yaw put it to the author:

> He declared to the Asantehene that he was the wealthiest chief in Asante. He had a lot of gold dust, and he proved this by producing it. He invited the Asantehene to his funeral. When the Asantehene went to Ankaase he was expecting a lot of gifts. He found a lot of gold in the pits. He brought all this gold to Kumasi. If the stool is really so wealthy . . . if it is true that the stool is wealthy . . . said the Asantehene, then I will henceforth appoint my sons and grandsons to the stool so they can give me money when I need it.[28]

But the Asantehene was not by this statement disowning this family from the stool rights they had enjoyed for almost a century. He also stated that preference would be given to sons and grandsons of his ayete wives from Ankaase. As for grandsons' succession, priority was given to "the son's sons before the daughter's sons."[29]

Fourth, modifying the succession fitted into the Asantehene's policy of establishing an integrated link with the other stools in Asante state. Through this policy the Asantehene's sons with his ayete wives from other stools were able to initiate local links within their oman by a similar pattern of establishing relationships with the local ruling families. For example, Asantehene Osei Bonsu married an ayete wife

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[28]Tradition by Kyidomhene Oheneba Osei Yaw.

[29]Ibid.

from Ankaase, and from this union was born Oheneba Akwasi Sekyere, who became Kyidomhene. Oheneba Akwasi married locally in Ankaase, and one of his sons, Osei Tutu Kumaa, was the father of Kwasi Sekyere, the present Kontirehene of Ankaase and one of the historians of this stool.[30] Furthermore, the sons that the Asantehene sired with these wives were eligible to marry the Asantehene's maternal nieces, thereby strengthening thekinship bonds. Thus Kyidomhene Oheneba Krapa, who was the son of Asantehene Fredua Agyeman, married Nana Akua Afriiyie. He was the grandfather of the present Asantehemaa and great grandfather of Otumfuo Opoku Ware II, the present Asantehene.[31]

Fifth, the right of the Asantehene to appoint candidates who were not descendants of Yamoa gave him leeway to use his influence in selecting the new Kyidomhene when the loyalty of potential candidates was questionable. During the civil war over succession that threw most of Asante into turmoil in the late 1880's, the Ankaase people supported Atweneboana for the Golden Stool against Prempeh I. At that time the Ankaase people were led by Nkwankwahene Akwasi Agyeman, who was the son of Ankaase's queen mother. When Prempeh's followers finally defeated his opponents, the

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[30] Tradition by Kyidom stool historians.

[31] Ibid., and Asantehemaa and her Okyeame.

new Kyidomhene became Kwame Boateng, half brother of Asantehemaa Yaa Kyaa and Prempeh's mother.[32]

Atipin stool provides material for a further analysis of the ahenemmadwa stools. The founding of this stool indicates the increasing need for administrators and illustrates the reasons used for creating new positions. According to tradition, this stool was created by Asantehene Osei Kwame for his son Oheneba Owusu Ansa.[33] When Osei Kwame ascended to the Golden Stool as a minor, he was given presents amounting to mpredwan dumienu,[34] which he entrusted to the caretaker of Kumasi, Adontenhene Nana Amankwaa.[35] When Osei grew older and asked Nana Amankwaa for his money, he found that most of it had been embezzled. He was told that the money had been spent entertaining guests, the use for which it was originally intended, but he thought that Nana Amankwaa and an undisclosed Kumasi

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[32]Tradition given by Kyidomhene stool historians. He was exiled with Prempeh by the British in 1896. See confidential Minute Papers Accession no. 2181; ADM 11/1728.

[33]IAS/AS 9.

[34]One predwan is equivalent to eight Ghana pounds which are equal to sixteen new cedis.

[35]This is the same person who is remembered in Adonten tradition as Amankwaa Sei. A genealogical analysis reveals the probable motive for entrusting Adontenhene Amankwaa with this rule. He was the son of Kokofuhene (Oyokohene and close relative of the Golden Stool) Kofi Nti Panin. Adontenhene stool house is an ayete family for Kokofuhene. Kofi Nti Panin had married Nana Difie. Tradition provided by Adontenhene Nana Agyeman Nkwantabisa and his elders.

Okyeame had used the money themselves and were lying to him. When he demanded that the money be repaid or that Amankwaa be severely punished, the latter decided to repay it by surrendering four villages: Eseso, Ehwia, Abira and Adugyanma.[36] To get someone to administer these villages (and apparently to create a job for his son) Osei Kwame created Atipin stool for Oheneba Owusu Ansa.

This stool was also created to enlarge the Ankobia fekuo. The resistance that marked Osei Kwame's succession to the Golden Stool left scars and resentment that called for vigilance and the strengthening of the king's palace guard, the Ankobia.[37] Among his opponents were Oyoko-Bremanghene Nana Ntoo-Boroku who "conspired with some members of Kumasi Traditionsl Council of Chiefs to oppose vehemently the candidature of Nana Osei Kwame . . . They preferred the candidature of a certain royal from Amo in the Kokofu District."[38] Oheneba Owusu Ansa was second in command to

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[36]IAS/AS 9, p. 2.

[37]Osei Kwame grew up outside of Kumasi either at Mampong or elsewhere. At one time he was living at Ankaase under the care of Kyidomhene. See Kyidom, IAS/AS 158.

[38]Ibid., p. 3. There are three branches of the Oyoko clan: Oyoko-Bremang, Oyoko-Atutue, and Oyoko-Abohyen. The Ohokohene of Kumasi and the Asantehene come from Oyoko Abohyen group. Hence Oyoko-Bremanghene's attempts could be seen as attempts to replace one Oyoko branch with another for the control of the Golden Stool. See Oyoko stool history IAS/AS 28, Oyoko-Bremang stool history, IAS/AS 56, Atutue Stool history, IAS/AS 32.

Ankobiahene. Given such an opposition, creation of the Atipin stool can be seen in the same light as the appointment of Kyidomhene Kwame Boateng to the Ankaase stool following the Atweneboana fiasco. It can also be compared with the succession of Oheneba Banahene to Ankaase stool just before the Adinkra War.

The Ankobia stool, which Atipin stool was intended to strengthen was created between the time of Osei Kwadwo and Osei Kwame. According to one tradition this stool was created for Kra Patapako, who was afana or sword bearer of the Bosomuru sword for Asantehene Opoku Ware. Kra Patapako had inherited this job from his cousin Nana Doku, the first man to carry the Bosomuru sword.[39] Yet another tradition indicates that this stool was created by Asantehene Osei Kwadwo for Kra Patapaafu.[40] When Nana Kra Patapako died he was succeeded by his brother Nana Gyienin (or Dwanini) during the reign of Osei Kwame, and at the time that this Asantehene decided to add Atipin stool to Ankobia. All through this period, it appears that the stool was strictly nhenkwadwa stool. This assumption is partly based on lack of evidence indicating whether any of the first few Ankobiahene was connected with any royal

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[39]Tradition provided by Ankobiahene Bafuo Poku Dum and his elders.

[40]IAS/AS 2, p. 2. Although there is a difference in spelling this is obviously the same person.

house.[41] According to tradition Ankobiahene Ankaase (or Nkansa) was related to Poku (or Kwaku) Tawia. The latter, however, had important kinship connections with the Golden Stool: his father was Denkyasehene Nana Adweni; he had also married into Kumasi Oyokohene's house, and his son was Oyokohene Agyekum I.[42] From this time up to the end of the nineteenth century the stool occupants had royal connections with the Golden stool as Ohenemma (for example, Ankobiahene Nana Yaw Kyem, who was the son of Osei Bonsu and occupied the stool during Mensa Bonsu's time) or Ohenenana (for example, Ankobiahene Atta Gyamfi). It is not clear whether Oheneba Owusu Yaw Kumaa ever occupied the stool. One stool list does not contain his name, which is unusual, since he was Asantehene's son. However, written traditions gathered by J. Agyeman Duah and the author agree that Yaw Kyem occupied the Ankobia stool, while the reasons given for his destoolment differ. It seems possible that the "maladministration" referred to as a cause for his destoolment involved his support of Atwereboama's quest for the Golden Stool.[43]

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[41]Nana Abonyaa was related neither to his predecessors nor to his successors.

[42]Tradition given by Ankobiahene and his elders; Kumasi Oyokohene Nana Kofi Poku; See also IAS/AS 28 and IAS/AS 2.

[43]Tradition given by Ankobiahene and his elders. Compare this with IAS/AS 2, pp. 2 and 3. After this

The addition of Atipin stool to Ankobia fekuo and the myth of succession connected to it provide interesting material for political analysis. Since none of the Ankobiahene at this time was a royal or was genealogically connected with the Golden Stool, it was important that the Asantehene have someone trustworthy to prevent the Ankobiahene from misusing the guns under his control. Although the Ankobiahene were only Nhenkwa, we know that the first one must have been a free man and was probably connected with other Kumasi political forces--he had the title of Kra, 'soul washer,' before he became Ankobiahene. The fact that his successor and brother Bosomuru Gyienini was succeeded not by their relative but by Abonyaa indicates a possible rift between the Asantehene and Kra Patapako family. The subsequent succession of Abonyaa by members of Nkansa and Tawia families indicates another shift on the part of Asantehene. He seems to have wished to entrust the stool eventually to a family that was much closer to Otumfuo. And obviously Nana Tawia, Oyokohene's son-in-law and Denyasehene's son, was more than a mere Ahenkwa.[44] Kwaku Tawia had also married Ohenebaa Ama Sewaa, the daughter of Asantehene Fredua

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destollment the stool was left empty until after the Yaa Asantewa war.

[44]Genealogy tradition provided by Ankobiahene and Okyokohene.

Agyeman and Akua Adei Kumaa, who was a royal of Asrampong stool.[45] Furthermore, the Atipinhene was to play a major role in the appointment of the new Ankobiahene. When an Ankobiahene dies, the Gyase fekuo within the Ankobia fekuo[46] meets and consults with the other two members of Wiremfuo ('king maker'), the Atumtufuohene and Bosomprahene, to select an appropriate Ahenkwa for the vacant office. Then the Wiremfuo present their candidate for approval by a council of major Ankobiafuohene in which Atipinhene was substantial influence. If the Wiremfuo's choice is approved, then the Asantehene is informed. Upon his approval, a date for the taking of the oath of office is set.[47]

Succession to Atipin stool was stipulated at the time of its founding, but on closer examination we find that the rules were not followed. As Oheneba Owusu Ansa was the only son of his mother, and his only sister, Nyakowaa, had no children, his main concern when his stool was created centered on choosing his successor.[48] Finally this concern was brought to the

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[45]Tradition provided by Asramponghene Oheneba Afodjuo.

[46]Each stool of any significance, especially one that has the status of swearing to the Asantehene using the mpomponsuo sword, has its own gyase fekuo.

[47]Tradition provided by Ankobiahene.

[48]This concern is not unique, because most stools created in Asante were regarded as family stools for nephews or grandnephews.

attention of the Asantehene, who solved it by changing the succession of the stool from nephews to sons, as we see in the following tradition:

> . . . when Otumfuo Nana Osei Kwame created the stool for his son, Nana Owusu Ansa started to weep when coming to take the oath of allegiance. So Otumfuo asked him the reason for his weeping. He replied that he had given the stool to him as his beloved son alone and that he had no supporter. Then the Otumfuo Osei Kwame ordered that as from that date the sons and grandsons of the Golden Stool should inherit the said stool.[49]

Since Osei Kwame was enstooled at an early age (c. 1777), he probably did not have a son old enough to occupy Atipin stool until towards the end of his reign, in the late 1790's. It would also seem that Osusu Ansa's sister, who was at most twenty years old when her father died in 1801, was considered incapable of childbearing.

Except for Nana Abotremu, whose parents, Nana Akua Maanu and Nana Kusi Boakye, were mrantie, all the successors of Oheneba Owusu Ansa until the time of Yaa Asantewa were sons or grandsons of Asantehene.[50] They were also sons or grandsons of the Atipinhene. For example, the second Atipinhene was both the son of the

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[49] IAS/AS 9, pp. 2-3. The supporter here could only have been a nephew or a niece who could bear a grandnephew to succeed him, of which he had none. Tradition provided by Ankobiahene and his elders.

[50] Ibid., see also IAS/AS 9. There is nothing in written or oral tradition that reveals unusual circumstances contributing to his ascension to the stool.

first Atipinhene and the grandson of Asantehene Osei Kwame. And Atipinhene Owusu Kwame, also called Owusu Ansa, was the son of Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto and grandson of the first Atipinhene. After the turn of the century and the Yaa Asantewa war, the Atipin stool was given to Kwaku Dua of Mampong by the British.[51] When Kwaku Dua left, the next two successors, Boakye Yaw and Boakye Dankwa, were sons of Prempeh I. Then there was another Awiamfuo of whom we know nothing, followed by the present Atipinhene Nana Osei Kwame, the son of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu's daughter and Offinsuhene's grandson, Owusu Ansa.[52]

Whereas the Atipin stool successors show close connections with the Golden Stool after the Yaa Asantewa War, the Ankobia stool does not. None of the last five occupants of the latter stool is an Oheneba. Kwame Kusi, a grandson of Asantehene Kusi Buadum[53] was given this stool as a reward by the British for helping them during the Yaa Asantewa war; Osei Kwadwo and Dwanini II are described as grandsons of past Atipinhene, and Kwaku Asumanin and Bafuo Poku Dum are not even grandsons.

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[51]He too was related to the Golden Stool: his mother Sewaa Akoto, a Mampong Beretuo royal, was the daughter of Oheneba Owusu Yaw, the son of Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto. And his father Oheneba Boakye Atonsa was the son of Asantehene Fredua Agyeman. In 1930 Kwaku Dua abdicated Atipin stool to ascend to the Silver stool of Mampong with the stool name of Osei Bonsu. Ibid.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid.

This difference between the stools reveals one important fact: Atipinhene tend to have higher social origins than Ankobiahene. Although the Atipinhene ranks second in command to Ankobiahene in this fekuo, it is apparent that in terms of political influence and access to the Asantehene's ear, the Atipinhene is more important. This author was once informed by the Atipinhene that the Asantehene's aim in giving this stool to his son was to have someone reliable in Ankobia fekuo who could keep him informed of what was happening there.[54] The Ankobiahene and the Atumtufuo that he commanded had a lot of guns and firing power, and the Asantehene was wise enough to be cautious.

Let us compare two minor ahenemmadwa stools, Apentang and Asrampong, with the four that we have discussed so far. Asrampong stool was created by Osei Tutu after the Denkyera campaign[55] for Nana Krakese (also spelled Karikasi), who was also eligible for Dabuase stool. His mother, Nyakowaa, had two other sons, Nana Kwame Sem and Boateng, who became Dabuasehene consecutively, and one daughter, Nana Akua Adei Panin. To an unknown husband she bore Nana Kwadwo Yamoa, the second Asramponghene, and Nana Ama Aku, who married Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto. From this time

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[54]Atipinhene Oheneba Osei Kwame and his elders.

[55]Asrampong Stool History, IAS/AS 4, p. 2.

to the present the occupants of this stool have been sons of Asantehene and female descendants of Nyakowaa.[56] At one time three Asantehene--Kofi Karikari, Mensa Bonsu and Prempeh I--married the daughters of Akua Adee and Fredua Agyeman. An important aspect to note in this case is that the stool was not created for Asantehene's relatives; nor were its first few occupants related to the Golden Stool. Later the Asantehene started marrying into these families, thereby changing the stool succession to sons and grandsons of the Asantehene.[57]

According to Apentanghene history, Apentang stool was created by Asantehene Osei Tutu for his son Oheneba Owusu Afriiye. Nowadays, the function of Apentanghene is to supervise servants who perform certain services for the Asantehene, such as key carriers, wine-bearers, and caretakers of stools used for foot rests.[58] In the old days Nana Apentanghene used to send his stool servants to the coast to buy domestic supplies for the Asantehene.[59] Oheneba Owusu Afriiye's

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[56]Tradition provided by Asramponghene Oheneba Afodjuo.

[57]Some of the discrepancies found in Asrampong stool history were verified by the author with Asramponghene Oheneba Nana Afodjuo.

[58]Apentanghene is a low ranking stool but one that is important as illustrating the possible variations in low ranking stools intended for Asantehene's relatives.

[59]Tradition on this stool was given to the author by the present Apentanghene Owusu Afriiye.

mother, Nana Ama Beema, a relative of Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari, was married to Osei Tutu after the Feyiase campaign. This marriage established an ayete relationship between this family and the Golden Stool. It was from sons and grandsons of the females of this house married to the Asantehene that the future Apentanghene were recruited. For example, the mother of the second Apentanghene, Oheneba Tontua, was Adwoa Pinamang, described as "Apentanghene abosuani and ayete of the Asantehene."[60] His father was Opoku Ware. Except for the third Ohene, Kwame Ampoma, genealogical analysis reveals that all the others were sons or grandsons of the Asantehene. Oheneba Yaw Dwene was the son of Asantehene Kusi Buadum; Oheneba Kwaku Dua was the son of Otumfuo Kofi Karikari; Kwame Boateng and Kofi Nti were sons of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu and Kofi Karikari respectively; and Owusu Afriiye II is the great grandson of Opoku Ware.[61] Nana Kwame Ampoma had important connections: his father was the son of the first Atutuehene who was also Asantehene's chief linguist.[62]

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Although the present Apentanghene bears the title Oheneba, 'prince,' this is a common formal title for anyone occupying the stool designated for Ahenemma. This can be misleading to a casual outside observer unaware of this usage. This Apentanghene, for example, is the son of Ama Akyaa, the daughter of Ama Enko, whose father was Asantehene Opoku Ware. Ama Enko was also the brother of Oheneba Tontua.

[62] This Atutuehene was Nana Boansi Kofi. He was also one of the delegates sent to Akwamu to come to

This history of the creation of these stools and the four discussed previously leads us to draw several conclusions. The nature of the stool was not determined by its size: the small Apentang stool and the large Kyidom stool were both valuable to the Asantehene for the vital services they rendered to the nation. These services could have been largely administrative or domestic. Hiahene had large tracts of land on which captives were settled and eventually assimilated into Asante society.[63] According to tradition, the Ankobiahene and Atipinhene also ruled lands that were given to them by the Asantehene either as a result of successful campaigns against Adinkra or in peace time.[64] It was from these areas that future personnel needed for service in the Asante army, religion or administration were recruited. Even those stools that began as abosuadwa were altered by the Asantehene's intermarriage. We could argue that this was deliberately done, but the argument is not conclusive. The Asantehene needed the support of other stool holders and they needed him. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the Asantehene's desire to marry into these families met with their

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take over the Kumasihene stool after the death of Obiri Yeboa. See Atutue Stool History, IAS/AS 32, pp. 1-2. Tradition provided by Apentanghene.

[63] IAS/AS 154.

[64] Tradition provided by Ankobiahene and Atipinhene and their elders.

approval; it could also have been sought, especially given the status consciousness of the Asante. Once the Asantehene had sons by ayete wives from these families and had to provide for them, he might logically have dealt with this problem by making stool succession open to both sons and grandsons. Obviously this system resulted in closer cooperation between the Golden Stool and these other stools. The accounts given to legitimize succession of sons and grandsons could be mythical, since myths have historically been invented to prove legitimacy, or they could be true. The expansion of Asante in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries might have influenced Asantehene's decision to give their sons and grandsons greater administrative responsibility. Although we do not have detailed genealogies of Akyeampim and Hia stools, it seems unlikely that their pattern of succession and the factors influencing it were radically different from those stools for which we have ample traditions--Atipin, Ankobia, Kyidom, Apentang and Asrampong.

In most cases the sons and grandsons on these stools were trustworthy, though this does not mean that the Otumfuo gave them a free rein to do whatever they pleased. The Asantehene had similar stools in other fekuo who could readily tell him what was going on in these fekuo at all times. For example, Nkrawahene stool, which is in Gyase fekuo, provides information

for the Asantehene in that fekuo.[65] This stool had been created by Osei Kwadwo for another of his sons, Oheneba Owusu Afriiye, as the head of the three hundred-strong armed guard unit for the Asantehene.[66] Asantehene Fredua Agyeman created Somi stool, which is now in the Manwere fekuo, for his son Oheneba Akwasi Abaayie, to join the other ahenemmadwa stools which, according to tradition, "serve as watchdogs in the various military divisions composed by his predecessors."[67] During the army reorganization carried out by Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye at the turn of the 17th century, Afarihene Achampong, Kumasihene's son, who occupied one of the earliest founded ahenemmadwa stools, was transferred to Kontire fekuo ". . . to serve as a watch-dog within that division. Even to-day the Afarihene serves as a 'detective' of the King so far as the Kronti clan of the king is concerned."[68] Thus

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[65]Tradition given by Nkrawahene Oheneba Owusu Afriiye IV.

[66]Nkarawa Stool History IAS/AS 108. Osei Kwadwo also created Ntutia stool, abosuadwa, for the chief of all the 500 long barelled guns at the palace used for protecting the Golden Stool. The first Ntutiahene Nana Asare had distinguished himself as a fighter in Asante-Banda war. Ntutia Stool History IAS/AS 29.

[67]Somi Stool History IAS/AS 83, p. 1. The other Somihene have been Ahenemma except for the present one who is Ohenenana.

[68]Afari Stool History IAS/AS 49, pp. 1-2.

a prevailing rationale behind the creation of ahen-emmadwa stools was to have trustworthy people to administer or perform other functions that the king deemed important. The sons could be trusted to uphold their fathers' interests. These sons were not isolated from the rest of society or from other stool holders into whose families they married or had their sisters married.

Nhenkwadwa Service Stools

These are stools designated for the king's servants. Succession to them is mainly based on merit. We need this differentiating criterion, because in all of Asante everyone is theoretically an Ahenkwa or servant of the Asantehene--regardless of the type of stool he occupies. And in Obirempong areas everyone under the Obirempong is Obirempong's servant, whether the individual is a noble (odehyie), a free person (onipa), a servant or subject (akoa) or a slave (odonkoni).[69] The term Nhenkwaa is the plural form of the Twi word ahenkwa, a contraction of ohene 'chief' and akoa 'servant.' In practice, at both the Asanteman and Oman levels there are stools that the king cannot give to anyone he pleases, because they are considered

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[69]Information given by Nana Jamasihene and his elders; Bantama stool historians and several elders in both Kumasi and Mampong. In defining, akoa Christaller gives a germaine example: Kokofuhene ye Asantehene akoa, meaning that Kokofuhene is the Asantehene's servant.

possessions of the families for which they were created. Our concern here will be with those stools that the king can fill with free subjects of his own choice from any family, or with slaves.[70]

One might ask here whether the king has the power to influence the choice of the successors to other stools. Indeed he does, especially with ahenemmadwa, but even then he is mainly restricted by the traditional requirement for these stools that he should give priority to Ahenemma and Ahenenana of a particular family. His right is non-existent in abosuadwa stools, where the members of that stool appoint a successor solely on the basis of how well they believe he can protect the family interests and be a good advisor to the king. The king might subtly express his preference for a candidate from a group of adehyie contenders, but if the abosuadwa king makers do not believe that the candidate is appropriate for the stool, they will not elect him. The relationship between these stools and the king is set up in the unwritten Asante constitution, which assigns certain rights to each side: the Ohene rules with the consent of, or according to the advice he is given by Mpanyimfuo, which advice he swears to listen to and follow. The Ahene Mpanyimfuo, on the other hand, are

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[70]The ethnographic present used here for slaves refers to the pre-colonial era.

elected by the people, and they swear to the Ohene to give him good advice. If either party breaks its oath, the constitution provides that it can be removed from office. Exceptions to this rule, however, are not unusual: kings have often interfered with abosuadwa stool politics. But resistance to this interference has led to the eventual destoolment of such arrogant kings by the Ahene Mpanyimfuo.[71] Destoolment was a very effective means of enforcing constitutional compliance. In Mampong, of thirty Amanhene who have occupied the Silver Stool, ten were destooled.[72] And of the fifteen people who have occupied the Golden Stool three were destooled.[73]

There is still another difference between Nhenkwadwa and other stools, which is closely connected with the concept of servant. It can be argued that

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[71]Tradition provided by Mampong stool historians and several elders in Kumasi.

[72]This may be unusual but it can be partly explained by the fact that Mampong stool is the most difficult office to get elected to and to retain. This is due to the conflict of the four royal families that provide eligible candidates for succession to this stool. While the colonial situation was also a contributing factor, several of these rulers were destooled before the colonial era.

[73]These were Osei Kwame, Kofi Karikari and Mensa Bonsu. Priestley and Wilks believe that Kusi Buadum was "dethroned" in 1764 (op. cit., p. 94), but tradition provided in Kumasi by Nana Owusu Ansah and Oheneba Afodwo indicates that he abdicated because he had become blind. According to one of Okomfo Anokye's decrees, a blind person cannot continue to occupy the stool. Tradition given by Dr. A. A. Kyerematen.

since everyone in Asante is a servant of a higher ranking Ohene, it follows that the activities performed for the superior are services rendered. Hence, a difficulty will arise when we try to identify the type of service performed by the occupants of different stools.[74] In general the Osomadwuma which was performed for the Ohene by low ranking personnel falls within the realm of strictly nhenkwadwa stools. Examples of these are Akyineyekyefuohene (umbrella chief), Mentiahene (Asantehene's blower of the short horn), Nkaniahene (Asantehene's lamp lighting chief), Atenehene (who sets or lights lamps), Deboasehene (originally Osei Tutu's barber), Sumahene (who performs various household duties), Mmagyegyefohene (who arranges for the nursing of Asantehene's royal offspring), Danpoomuhene (who is responsible for the safekeeping of state swords and miscellaneous regalia), Bampanase Baamuhene (who takes care of the Bampanase mausoleum), Nnibihene (chief overseer of Otumfuo's caterers and sub-treasurer), Atomfuohene (in charge of various regalia and making knives and swords, used in war), Pekyihene (for bravery in battle), Asokwahene (head horn blower and trader for Otumfuo), Nkonuasoafohene

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[74] Osom 'service' comes from the Twi verb som, which means 'to serve (a master, a king, God, or an idol or fetish), to be a servant or subject.' When we combine service with adwuma, 'work,' we get osom-adwuma, which means 'office, service, duty, trust or charge conferred by authority.' Christaller, op. cit., pp. 468 and 109.

(head of Otumfuo's stool carriers) and Asomfuohene (senior goldsmith).[75]

These stools have common characteristics. Most of the occupants swear the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene with the Ahwehwebaa sword, while the rest use either the Mpomponsuo or Gyapatia swords. In most of them the procedure for electing the new occupant is similar to that followed in Asokwa stool: "In case the stool becomes vacant the electors elect their own candidate and present him to Otumfuo. If the Asantehene refuses the candidate the fekufuo or electors, will appoint a new candidate and if he is accepted then he will be allowed to swear to Otumfuo . . . ."[76] The significant thing to note here, in contrast with the procedure used for other stools, is that the Asantehene has the power of absolute veto. If he rejects a candidate there is nothing the fekufuo can do beyond electing another qualified Ahenkwa who is also acceptable to Otumfuo. In the case of other stools, the

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[75]Asantehene's stool carriers IAS/AS 30; Asokwa Stool History IAS/AS 1; Pekyi No. 2 Stool History, IAS/AS 20; Kyenekyenfuo Stool History, IAS/AS 113; Atomfuo Stool History, IAS/AS 168; Nnibi Stool History, IAS/AS 157; Ahobrofo Stool History, IAS/AS 27; Baamu Stool History, IAS/AS 91; Asomfuo Stool History IAS/AS 14; Danpomu Stool History, IAS/AS 92; Magyegyefo Stool History, IAS/AS 104; Suma Stool History, IAS/AS 109; Deboase Stool History, IAS/AS 65; Atene Akuapong Stool History, IAS/AS 21; Nkaniasohene Stool History, IAS/AS 93; Mentia Stool History, IAS/AS 57; Akyineyekyefuo Stool History, IAS/AS 181.

[76]IAS/AS 1, op. cit., p. 2.

Asantehene's power is limited by the power that tradition has conferred on families connected with the stools to which the appointment is being made. In nhenkwadwa stools the appointment to office was largely dependent on merit, whereas with other stools family interests were also taken into consideration. Most of Nhenkwadwahene were supervisors of household servants who did not perform functions that were crucial to the running of the Asante aban (government) machinery. These functions were mainly the responsibility of Ahene with the rank of Mpomponsuo. They were common household servants who were duplicated to a certain degree in the households of Amanhene and other Mpomponsuo.[77]

Esomdwa stools form a very small percentage of Asante stools. There are about 205 stools whose oral history was recorded by John Agyeman-Duah under the aegis of the Ashanti Research Project.[78] Of all these stools he categorizes about twenty-five as esomdwa or nhenkwadwa, and of these there is evidence to show

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[77]Kumasi Ahene, like Bantamahene, Adontenhene, Akyempimhene, Tafohene and Akwamuhene, have the same rank as Amanhene. In fact, the position of Bantamahene in terms of power in Asante politics is comparable only to that of Mamponghene in the whole of Asante. Tradition provided by Bantama stool historians, IAS/AS 39 and 40, Mampong stool historians, Nana Owusu Ansah and numerable elders and Asante stool histories.

[78]These were consulted extensively by the author at the Asantehene's archives, Manhyia, Kumasi. The A.R.P. was funded through the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

that only the above sixteen are true nhenkwadwa. Of these sixteen, three were created by Oti Akenten or Obiri Yeboa;[79] six by Osei Tutu;[80] two by Opoku Ware II;[81] three by Osei Bonsu;[82] one by Osei Yaw Akoto;[83] and the last by Fredua Agyeman.[84] These data can be interpreted in several ways. First they indicate that by the time Osei Tutu died most of the Asante household servant supervisors were already in existence. Second, that new ones were added as necessity arose. For example, Opoku Ware's creation of the Nnibi stool indicates that during his reign there were many more Asantehene food caterers and more money transactions connected with the king's food supply. Before he became Nnibihene, Nana Asumanin had been subtreasurer (Fotuosanfuohene) or assistant to the Sanahene responsible for the fotuo, the leather bag that contains the standard weights used to weigh gold dust.

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[79] IAS/AS 109, IAS/AS 168 and IAS/AS 113.

[80] IAS/AS 65, IAS/AS 91, IAS/AS 120, IAS/AS 1, IAS/AS 30, and IAS/AS 57.

[81] IAS/AS 181 and IAS/AS 157.

[82] IAS/AS 93, IAS/AS 21, and IAS/AS 92.

[83] IAS/AS 104.

[84] IAS/AS 14. Asantehene Prempeh I created nhenkwadwa stool of Omanti when he came from exile in 1924 ". . . for household servants of the king who prove themselves industrious, energetic and faithful." Omanti Stool History IAS/AS 71, p. 1. The name of this stool and the purpose of creating it was to symbolize the sacrifice Prempeh went through in exile.

Following the Gyaman war, Opoku Ware also created Akyineyekyefuo stool to take care of special umbrellas and the "daily administration of affairs connected with these umbrellas."[85] This new regalia and the importance attached to it indicates the status consciousness of the new Asante nation and the esteem in which its tributaries held it.[86]

There were no more nhenkwadwa stools created until the second Gyaman war, when Osei Bonsu was Asantehene. One of the strategies Osei Bonsu intended to use against Adinkra's forces was to set fire to the savanna. To carry out this plan he created Atene Akwapong stool "with a view to setting fire to the savanna land of Gyaman King Adinkra,"[87] using atene or palm fibers used for starting fires or lighting lamps. Atenehene was also expected to guard the Golden Stool in peacetime on ceremonial occasions.[88] Osei Bonsu's expanding household retinue is shown by his creation of another stool for Nkaniasohene, for lighting the king's lamps and lights and for safekeeping of the "traditional chamber pot used in

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[85]IAS/AS 181, p. 1.

[86]By this time the fame of Dahomey kingdom was well known by Opoku Ware. Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 235-236.

[87]IAS/AS 21, p. 1.

[88]Prempeh II changed this stool from Nhenkwadwa to Abosuadwa, ibid., p. 3.

ceremonial occasions such as Akwasidae or State Durbars."[89] It is interesting to note that one reason the stool was created was the increased night time celebration of some of the state festivals. The third nhenkwadwa stool created by Osei Bonsu was that of Danpomu who was the safekeeper of specified regalia: "state swords including Mponponsuo, golden guns, golden bottles and fans."[90] All these were used for state ceremonies, especially the Mpomponsuo sword, which was first used by Opoku Ware. The first occupant of this stool, a Gyaman war captive at the end of Adinkra campaign, reveals the Asante ability to assimilate slaves into their society. Why did Osei Bonsu appoint a recent war captive "as one of household officials. . . or the Chief Watchman of the Asantehene's Regalia room. . .?"[91] Possibly, Nana Denin as a northerner was expected to supervise the other northern watchmen guarding various parts of the Palace with poisoned bows and arrows.[92] While these weapons were deadly, in terms of mass action they were not as deadly as guns, which obviously could not have been entrusted to recent captives.

The last two nhenkwadwa stools, Mmagyegyefo and

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[89] IAS/AS 93, p. 1.

[90] IAS/AS 92, p. 1. [91] Ibid.

[92] Even nowadays prominent people at Kumasi will tell you that the best watchmen are northerners who may be seen guarding the front gates of the fenced courtyards after dark, still armed with the same weapons.

Asomfuo, were created by Osei Yaw Akoto and Fredua Agyeman respectively. The first Mmagyegyefuo, Nana Bosomuru Amoabeng, was given three hundred servants to help him fulfill his new responsibility of informing the Asantehene officially "whenever there was a new offspring of the royal issue pertaining to the king and he is in fact responsible for the nursing and the day-to-day domestic arrangement of the new royal."[93] Tradition does not link Osei Yaw Akoto with many marriages, which makes it difficult to understand any special concern for royal births beyond the concern that the offspring should be well cared for.[94] Asantehene Fredua Agyeman created Asomfuo stool for Nana Tabiri in order to have a senior goldsmith of his own, like Denkyerahene.[95] Tekyimanhene and Okyenhene also had goldsmiths, who, according to tradition ". . . were captives of war or prisoners taken to Kumasi by conquest of war, and affiliated to the Ashantis."[96] Although Asomfuo is described as a patrilineal stool, the

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[93]IAS/AS 104, p. 1.

[94]Opoku Ware is remembered in tradition as the Asantehene with the most wives--1300 wives.

[95]The first head goldsmith of Asantehene was Nana Agyare who, according to tradition, was Adwumfuohene of Denkyerahene and who came to Kumasi to follow his sisters who had eloped with Osei Tutu. IAS/AS 104, p. 2. See also Adwumfuohene Stool History, IAS/AS 13.

[96]IAS/AS 14, p. 2. This is another example of the wise Asante policy of recruiting or utilizing skilled personnel from the conquered areas.

qualification for election is based largely on merit, as it is for the nhenkwadwa: "It is a stool which is awarded to the best goldsmith on the paternal line. Before anyone is appointed to the stool, he must prove himself to be a skillful goldsmith."[97]

It is thus clear that these stools were not very important administratively. Their origins and the functions connected with them were partly due to the rise of the Asante nation under Osei Tutu. As time passed, and Osei's successors were confronted with the need for more supervisors of household servants, these were appointed mainly from locally qualified personnel, or in rare cases from war captives. The demand for such personnel was never again as great as it had been in Osei Tutu's time. Obviously the power that these Ahene had is negligible compared to that wielded by occupants of the other stools, especially the abosuadwa. By and large this was due to the nature of their duties, which confined them within Manhyia (Asantehene's palace). It would, thus, be a mistake to argue that nhenkwaadwa stools were crucially important or wielded any power in Asante politics. They did not. They were in a position neither to influence the Asantehene's viewpoint, nor to influence any political outcome with the other stools. But we cannot ignore them entirely without doing a disservice to a study of Asante

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[97] Ibid., p. 3.

administrators, whose origins, power and influence are closely connected with their stools.

Creation of Adehyemmadwa Stools

In Chapter Four, we referred to adehyemmadwa stools as those which are occupied by brothers, sons and specified grandsons of the ruling stoolholder. Some of these grandsons were the son's sons, the daughter's sons or the sister's grandsons. We should look into some of the common characteristics shared by these stools in general. First, most of the successors to the stool are sons from the family for which the stool was created. When a son is not available, a grandson is chosen. And if no son or grandson is available, the stool is given to a nephew or grandnephew. Adehyemmadwa stool holders generally use the Mpomponsuo sword during the enstoolment, which indicates that they have relatively high status. The majority of these stools were created during the reign of Osei Tutu. This fact is significant because it reveals, as also with the esomdwa stools, that many of the main political positions in Asante already existed or were established within the first decades of the founding of the Asante union. Only the Boakye Yam Kuma stool occupant was of the Ahwehweba rank. The sword used for swearing the oath of allegiance for the Ohene is also an indicator of the Ohene's rank within the Asante political structure. All the other

adehyemmadwa Ohene during Osei Tutu's era were of Mpomponsuo rank.[98]

Other Asantehene succeeding Osei Tutu created a few adehyemmadwa stools. Opoku Ware I created two--Abrafohene (head executioner), who uses the Ahwehweba sword,[99] Gyasehene, one of the most important new stools after Osei Tutu's period.[100] Osei Kwadwo created the Boakye Yam (Panin) linguist stool for the nephew of Asokwahene Kwadwo Anon.[101] Osei Bonsu created three stools--Ano Panin[102] and Akankade stools,[103] both linguists stools and with Ahwehweba rank, and Asantre-Adankwame stool with Mpomponsuo rank.[104] The last adehyemmadwa stool--Boadu linguist stool--was founded by Asantehene Fredua Agyeman, and its occupant swears with the Mpomponsuo sword.[105] Once the stool has been created, the Asantehene respects the right of the stool-holder's family to elect the successor. According to

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[98]See Boakye Yam (Kuma) Stool History IAS/AS 23 and for the others: Akropong Stool History IAS/AS 199, Bosumuru Fabem Stool History IAS/AS 174, Bantama Stool History, op. cit., Akwaboa Stool History IAS/AS 17, Sanahene Stool History IAS/AS 41, Bantama-Baamu Stool History IAS/AS 54, Ampabame Stool History IAS/AS 144, Akwamu Stool History, op. cit., Nsumankwa Stool History IAS/AS 22, Trede Stool History IAS/AS 149.

[99]IAS/AS 27.

[100]IAS/AS 15.

[101]IAS/AS 73.

[102]IAS/AS 142.

[103]IAS/AS 75.

[104]IAS/AS 130.

[105]IAS/AS 59.

tradition, in Gyase stool, "the King (Asantehene) cannot use his prerogative in the appointment of a candidate for this stool."[106]

The circumstances leading to the creation of these stools are similar to those of the other stools, with the notable difference that some of the most important adehyemmadwa stools are military. Furthermore they were created in response to expanding government needs for personnel following the formation of the Asante union. Since several holders of these stools were formerly faithful servants of Osei Tutu--at Denkyera, Akwamu or Kumasi--we could conclude that the creation of permanent and high ranking stools with succession restricted mainly to patrilineal, (and occasionally matrilineal) descendants was a promotion of these servants. But with this promotion came the institutionalization of the stool to the family, and this conferred a certain degree of independence upon them. The family could support or refuse to support the Asantehene in his disagreements with abosuadwa stool holders. Thus the adehyemmadwa stools wielded the power necessary to balance Kumasi politics between the two major parties: the Asantehene on one hand and abosuadwa Ahene on the other. In this power realighment

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[106] IAS/AS 15, p. 2. The same rule is followed for most stools that J. Agyeman-Duah classifies under patrilineal descent or Mmadwa. An exception that we should note is the Esomdwa stools.

the ahenemmadwa stool holders often sided with the king.[107]

One of the most important of adehyemmadwa stools is the Bantama or Kontirehene of Kumasi. The Bantamahene is closely connected with the origins of Asante union. Priestly and Wilks refer to the first Bantamahene as ". . . the famous Amankwatia of Ashanti tradition, whose mother reputedly suckled Osei Tutu, . . ." Tutu, . . ."[107a] Other traditions give him the role of "a stool carrier of Denkyerahene Nana Boa Amponsem" who saved Osei Tutu by informing him that he was about to be executed by Denkyerahene for impregnating Amponsem's niece Abena Bensua:

> . . . in the court yard of Denkyerahene Nana Boa Amponsem, the stool carrier Amankwatia Panin, the first Bantamahene-to-be appointed by King Osei Tutu, was present at a secret meeting, if not a business meeting, of the Denkyerahene, and the latter revealed to his Royal Highness Osei Tutu that plans were afoot to have him decapitated as a result of the alleged pregnancy of Abena Bensua. So in the dead of night Osei fled with this faithful servant of his to the court of Akwamuhene, Nana Ansa Sasraku.[108]

It is not clear whether Amankwatia was Denkyerahene's stool carrier or Osei Tutu's stool carrier. Other traditions suggest the latter. As the Bantama stool historians have said, Amankwaatia Panin was "Osei

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[107]The majority of Asante stools whose traditions were collected by J. Agyeman-Duah are classified as abosuadwa.

[107a]Priestly & Wilks, op. cit., p. 87.

[108]IAS/AS 39, p. 2.

Tutu's friend and stool carrier."[109] After Osei left Denkyera, it seems logical that Nana Amankwatia became his new stool carrier. He had performed this role before, and it was proper for him to do it for his new master. Amankwatia's loyal service and dedication to Osei were instrumental to his appointment as the new Kontirehene (commander-in-chief) of the Kumasi army when Osei Tutu assumed political leadership at Kumasi. According to tradition "the word Kontire is said to have been derived from ko (fighting) and tiri (head), for the Kontihene was the commander of the army in the event of the chief himself not going to war."[110] Beside being the commander in chief the Bantamahene also became the second most important administrative official in the Kumasi politics--the vice-president of the Kumasi traditional council. Even today, whenever the Asantehene is not able to attend the deliberations of this council, the Bantamahene assumes the duties performed by the chair.[111]

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[109]Bantama stool historians, op. cit. The first Bantamahene's second name is Panin, i.e., 'senior.' Several of his successors took the same name. It is customary in Asante for stool holders on installation to take stool names from their predecessors, along with a special distinguishing name. A commonest name, especially when there are only two people with the same name, is Kuma, which means 'junior' or 'the younger.' Otherwise numbers like 'the third' or 'the fourth' were used.

[110]IAS/AS 39, p. 9.

[111]But when the Asantehene sits in Asanteman or Asante Kotoko, that is, the legislative and

The Bantamahene was indeed an important official in Asante. Asante traders travelling to the coast early in the eighteenth century indicate that he was politically the most prominent person, and the one who kept the peace after Osei Tutu's death. Osei Tutu expressed his trust by the sword and authority which he gave to Nana Amankwatia Panin.[112] He also conferred special importance on this stool by reorganizing the Kumasi army so that the Asafohene, the traditional commander in chief, became second in command to Bantamahene.[113] The newly established Bantama stool was strengthened initially by attaching to it seven warrior chiefs under the Bantamahene, and adding others as necessary. Some of these chiefs were occupants of older stools, while others occupied newly created ones. This reveals Osei Tutu's determination to have the Bantamahene take command of established abosuadwa or new ahenemmadwa stools.[114] All of these use the

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executive council for the entire Asante nation, the vice-President is the Mamponghene. When the Asantehene is out of the country or is unable to attend the Asanteman, then the Mamponghene is the chief administrative and legislative officer. Information provided by Isaac Kwadwo Agyeman, who is a retired senior secretary for Asanteman, and John Darkwah, the present senior secretary for Kumasi Traditional Council.

[112] Priestley and Wilks, op. cit., p. 87.

[113] IAS/AS 38.

[114] The following were the seven warrior chiefs: Bantama-Baamuhene, Afarihene, Essuowinhene, Akwaboahene, Kwawunahene, Amakye-Barihene (Gyedu Kumanin) and Twaafuo Baah. Ibid., p. 10.

Mpomponsuo sword for the oath of allegiance.

Linguistic evidence also provides some support for Bantamahene's unique status. The name Amankwatia is a combination of four names: oman (nation or state), akoa (servant or subject), a (that, who), and tia (to tread, step, to set foot). Hence, Amankwatia would be, literally, the state servant who walks or travels. The latter idea could be included as part of his name because he travelled or walked with Osei Tutu from Denkyera to Kumasi via Akwamu.[115] The second meaning of the name would be the state servant who surpasses or excels. The words surpasses or excels[116] would be appended to Bantamahene's name as one of Osei Tutu's most loyal and trustworthy servants whom he brought from Denkyera to Kumasi.

The succession to this stool is restricted to male descendants of the first Bantamahene and the ayete wives that he married, or to the sons of any Bantamahene by any of his domkwa wives, after his enstoolment. Once the Bantamahene has assumed office, he is obliged to marry a wife from the original five families in which the first Bantamahene had established ayete

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[115]Christaller, op. cit., p. 511. In one expression Christaller cites tia (ne) nan akyi to mean to journey, travel. Thus our derivation partly comes from this phrase because Osei Tutu and Amankwatia travelled on foot (nan).

[116]Ibid., p. 512.

relationship.[117] The original five ayete wives came from different parts of Asante. The first wife of Amankwatia Panin was an outstanding woman, a stool servant and soldier who went on several campaigns. She came from Nyinahen town, which is twenty-six miles from Kumasi and where a Frimaa stool was created for her and her family in recognition of her bravery and her contributions to the state.[118] The second wife, Nana Mmerewa Dwa, came from Tekyiman, over sixty miles north of Kumasi. The third, fourth and fifth wives came from Bekwaame (ten miles from Kumasi on Bekwai Road), Amakye Bare (thirteen miles from Kumasi on old Sunyani Road) and Tipiri Tanoso (about five miles in the same direction).[119] When a new Bantamahene assumed office, if there were ayete wives from any of these families whom he inherited from the previous stool occupants, then he was not obliged to marry a second wife from the same family. Over the years other ayete relationships have been established by succeeding Bantamahene. Nowadays stool wives can come from other villages, such as Peki, Tetirem, Nebehi, Akrofum, Asuonyu in Bekwai, Monsianso,[120] Abore, and Awua Adumaseonso, about a mile

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[117]Tradition provided by Bantama Stool historians.

[118]Ibid. [119]Ibid.

[120]Nana Gyewu, the seventh Bantamahene, married a woman from this village and their son became Bantamahene Amankwatia III. This village is in Manso area,

from Sunyani. From this village came Nana Kwame Koran, the fourteenth Bantamahene. To the northwest of Sunyani on the present Ghana-Ivory Coast border is Duadaso village, from which Awua Panin married Nana Abenaa Twumuwaa, with whom he begot the future Bantamahene Gyewu.

The distance from which some of the Bantamahene came is significant in Asante history. First, it casts serious doubt on the theory that the rulers of Asante came from within a thirty mile radius of Kumasi. Both Bantamahene Awua Panin and his son Gyewu came from the Kyakyumaa-Duadaso area, which is about one hundred and fifty miles from Kumasi. They came from the region where the Asante government was extended during the time of Amankwatia Panin and Asantehene Opoku Ware I, early in the eighteenth century. According to tradition there were many villages between Kumasi and Duadaso ruled by Bantamahene and from which the occupants of this stool could marry.[121]

Second, it reveals the Asante ability to incorporate the sons of important personalities into the national administration. The mothers of these sons do not seem to have been from royal families--for example, Nana Frima was described by the informants as "akonua

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about thirty miles southwest of Kumasi. Ibid.

[121]Bantama stool historians.

afana"[122] (afana means female servant).[123] Both Awua Panin's and Gyewu's mothers were also non-royals. One exception is Bantamahene Kwame Koran, whose uncle was one Ohene of Awua Adumase village.

Third, the territories that had been conquered during Opoku Ware's time were ruled by the Ahene who were related to the high ranking Kumasi kings. Whereas one of the Bantamahene's sons succeeded him, his brothers, who were not as fortunate, only succeeded in occupying local positions in the provinces.[124] This point can be clarified through the tradition relating to Awua Adumase, one of the principal villages under the Bantamahene, and the origin of its head administrator. Bantamahene Kwabena Awua, the fourth occupant of this stool, was asked by the stool elders to come to Kumasi and take over the office, but he was apprehensive about moving his entire family and retinue from his village in Brong Ahafo. Therefore, he stopped at Berekum near Sunyani and left his nephew Bosomtwe there with a few attendants and a hunter named Antipim.[125]

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[122] Ibid.

[123] Christaller, op. cit., p. 117.

[124] Bantamahene Gyewu, according to tradition, had approximately three hundred children. Tradition given by Bantamahene Akyeamehene Kwadwo Asabre, who is also a great-grandson of Gyewu.

[125] IAS/AS 40, p. 3.

Nana Kwabena anticipated that if there were any opposition to him in Kumasi he would then be able to come back and join his nephew. But if he succeeded to the stool in Kumasi, his nephew and the hunter would be the new rulers of this newly founded village and send meat regularly to him in Kumasi.[126] The new village was named Awua Odumase, which means the village under the odum tree, where Awua and his nephew held these negotiations.[127] As it turned out, Kwabena Awua did become the Bantamahene, and Odumase has since been ruled by Bosomtwe descendants. Odumasehene Bosomtwe is the Kontirehene of Bantama stool. Odumase expanded considerably in the first half of the eighteenth century as Asante power and influence increased in this area--captured lands and conquered people were entrusted to his administration.[128]

There were other Kumasi high ranking chiefs who assumed administrative functions for the same Brong Ahafo region: Hiahene Kradomse, Atumtufuohene Framo Gyerebaa, Nsumankwahene Gyedu Kumanini, Akyeampimhene Oheneba Owusu Kokoo, Akwasiasehene, who was the Bantama

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[126]It is not clear from the traditions whether Bosomtwe was maternal or paternal nephew of Awua. Probably he was a paternal nephew, since "the descendants of Awua now resident at Sunyani Odumase are recognized royals of Bantama stool." Ibid.

[127]Ibid.

[128]Bantama stool historians.

Gyasehene, and Kumasi Oyokohene Gyasehene, and Kumasi Oyokohene Nana Odiewuo.[129] Unlike Nana Bosomtwe, who could stay in his town and rule directly, some of the other Ahene appointed a family member or a trusted servant to go to these distant regions and administer them either directly or indirectly with the help of local personnel. Often war captives were sent into these regions after they had been acculturated into Asante society in Asante towns. During this time they took an oath to the Asantehene, promising never to return to their original homeland.[130] When the captives were all well assimilated and fear for their escape diminished, they were then dispatched to these villages and towns to hunt, cultivate and settle there under the direct or indirect rule of the Kumasi Ahene.[131] In cases where Kumasi Ahene ruled indirectly, the local personnel in the provinces took an oath of allegiance to the Otumfuo and pledged to cooperate with administrative representatives sent from Kumasi. This is the arrangement that prevailed between Asante and

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[129] Ibid.

[130] The oath in itself would not necessarily have deterred the captives from escaping, but most of them knew that all the roads and pathways connecting Asante and other regions were well guarded. According to tradition provided by many elders in Asante these road guards had a right to detain any suspicious traveller until they had sent a messenger to where he came from to verify his story.

[131] Bantama stool historians.

Tekyiman when Bantamahene Apraku and Asantehene Opoku Ware killed Tekyimanhene Ame Yaw in battle, and his successor, Etwi Kyeme, took the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene.[132]

The role of the family in Bantama stool reveals strong resistance to attempts by the Asantehene to curb the Bantamahene's power. A look at the situation of conflict between these two officials will reveal the political rights claimed and exercised by each party. During Osei Tutu's reign a very wise man, Nana Gyinadu, successfully arbitrated for Osei Tutu in the bitter quarrel between Bantamahene and Akwamuhene. As this had been a very difficult case, the Otumfuo rewarded Nana Gyinadu by making him an Okyeame entrusted with the responsibilities of helping the Bantamahene in judging cases. Another of his functions was to accompany the Bantamahene on every Tuesday and Thursday when the latter went to see the Asantehene on official business.[133] When Nana Gyinadu went to inform the Asantehene that Bantamahene desired a meeting, he took the opportunity to tell him of any clandestine intrigues

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[132] Ibid.

[133] Whenever an official came to see the Asantehene at the palace the visitor was required by tradition to send an Okyeame to inform the Asantehene that a certain official wanted audience with him. If the official was not important enough to bring his Okyeame, then he asked an Okyeame who ordinarily handled his affairs at the palace to carry his message to Otumfuo.

that the Bantamahene was planning. Or the Asantehene might take the opportunity to inquire about any problems in that stool. As Bantama Akyeamehene[134] Nana Kwadwo Asabre related to me, "The Akyeamehene was Otumfuo's eye at Bantama's court. The Otumfuo did not always trust the Bantamahene. The Otumfuo made Akyeamehene swear an oath to report whatever he heard. He was Asantehene's informant. The Bantamahene was feared because of his military power."[135] The Bantamahene was well aware of his military might, for "he did not fear the Asantehene."[136] This tradition is important because it contradicts the popular myth that once the Asantehene had given an office to a "servant" he could always count on his support. When the stool of Bantama was given to Amankwatia Panin together with subjects who owed direct allegiance to him, although indirectly to the Asantehene, he was able to use the allegiance to his own advantage and against his overlord.

Confrontation between the Bantamahene and Asantehene in the nineteenth century led to losses for both sides. During Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto's reign (1824-1838) war broke out between Juaben and Kumasi over who

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[134]There were other Okyeame stools created later on, and the descendants of Nana Gyinadu who occupied the senior Okyeame post became the Akyeamehene.

[135]Tradition provided by Bantama Akyeamehene Nana Kwadwo Asabre.

[136]Ibid.

should succeed Nsutahene Yaw Sekyere, who was killed at Dodowa in 1826. The Asantehene supported Nana Mafo, while Juabenhene Boateng supported another candidate. In the course of attempts to resolve their differences, it was found that Mafo's opponents had killed some Kumasi traders going to or from Salaga. When the relatives of the traders learned this, they went to Nsuta and avenged the atrocities in kind. But as Juabenhene was at Kumasi when this happened and had not been consulted, he returned to Juaben immediately. Boateng's misfortune did not end there, for soon afterward his close friend seduced his most beautiful wife and escaped to Kumasi. Enraged at this extreme insult, he asked to have the man extradited from Kumasi. The Asantehene reluctantly agreed, but sent an escort. As soon as Kotiaku, the adulterer, and his retinue reached Juaben, they were tried and executed, whereupon a fight broke out immediately. The result was complete defeat for Juabenhene and his army. He saved his life by fleeing south to Akim.[137] In this war, Asantehene

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[137]W. W. Claridge, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 422-423. This area which is next to Koforidua, came to be known as New Juaben. This was not the first time that Boateng had defied the Asantehene. Following the Dodowa defeat the Asantehene asked the Juabenhene to continue the campaign against the Fante, but he refused because he had to hurry back to Juaben to defend his mother Sewaa. Nana Boateng told the Asantehene that even if he stayed and captured a thousand Fantes, "they are not worth my mother, whom I must in the first place protect." Reindorf, op. cit., pp. 190-191. The adulterer's escape to Kumasi was not the first insult

Osei Yaw Akoto and Asante Kotoko were strongly influenced by Bantamahene Aprako Kumaa. But when Akoto died in 1838 and Fredua Agyeman succeeded him, he adopted a more conciliatory tone towards Juabenhene and attempted to reunite Juaben with the rest of Asante. Juabenhene, however, refused to bring his followers back to Asante unless his arch opponent was no longer in power "because he had advised Akoto to fight Juabenhene."[138] In the ensuing reunification negotiations, the new Asantehene conferred with Asante Kotoko in Bantamahene's absence, and they agreed to comply with Juabenhene's demands. One of these demands was that the Bantamahene should be executed. Then, according to tradition, the Bantamahene was "taken to a place near Manhyia (Otumfuo's palace) and beheaded and his head sent to Juabenhene in Koforidua. Only then did Juabenhene agree to move back to Asante."[139]

Boateng had suffered there. Before the Asante left for the Dodowa campaign, while Nana Boateng was visiting Kumasi one day, "his military chest containing 1000 peregwans, equal to £8,016-13-4 was audaciously stolen, and no trace of the thief could be found. Boateng was on the point of declaring war on Kumasi, but the elders of Dwaben, to prevent bloodshed offered to pay him the amount and did so, and the matter ended." Ibid., p. 195.

[138] Bantama stool historians.

[139] Ibid. During the negotiations the Juabenhene sent this question to the Asante man: "Mope nnipa baako anaa nnipa dodo?" and the reply, before the execution of Bantamahene was, "Yepe nnipa dodo," that is, "Do you want one person or many? We want many."

The appeasement of Juabenhene by the Asantehene is confirmed elsewhere. Claridge refers to Juabenhene Kofi Boateng's demand that "two of his cousins," who were in disagreement with him, be executed and "their whole families before he would consent to return." The Asantehene did not like this harsh demand, but unfortunately his political instincts prevailed over humanitarian considerations and "some seventy persons were executed in compliance with this demand."[140] Claridge does not record the death of Bantamahene, but it is likely that he was one of the unfortunate seventy victims. J. Agyeman-Duah records the tradition given to him by the late Bantamahene, Nana Kwasi Gyawu III, and his linguist Yaw Oppong that during this time, "Adu Tutu of the Akwaboa stool, one of the gunmen of Kronti, was beheaded for conspiring against the king."[141] There were "seventy-four chiefs" who were executed together with Akwaboahene for the same crime.[142]

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century

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[140]Claridge, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 423. The negotiations were begun by Akoto, but he died before the implementation of his appeasement concessions which took place during the earlier decades of Fredua Agey-man's reign. This explains the slight difference between tradition and written accounts of this episode. Late in Akoto's reign one Bantamahene was "decapitated for an act of conspiracy against the King." IAS/AS 39, p. 11. His successor was also "destooled for his mal-administration." Ibid.

[141]IAS/AS 40, p. 5. [142]IAS/AS 39, p. 11.

it was the Asantehene's turn to lose to Bantamahene. During Asantehene Mensa Bonsu's reign the Asante people, attempting to hold their crumbling state together, conducted a campaign against Juabenhene Asafo Agyei, who wanted to establish his independence from Kumasi.[143] In this period the Asantehene and the Bantamahene Kwabena Awua Kumaa disagreed over internal policies involving the war and Asante unification. As a consequence, according to tradition, the Asantehene used his influence to destool Kwabena Awua and imprison him "at Apremanso for more than forty days. Then he had Awua Nansahene enstooled as Bantamahene."[144] But this political interference by the king with Bantama stool politics is remembered in tradition as having angered

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[143]One of the most serious effects of the British invasion and burning of Kumasi was to undermine the Asante power, not only in the tributary areas but also in Asante proper. For example, after the Anglo-Ashanti war there were revolts in the Brong Ahafo region, in the East and Northeast in the Kratchi and Kwahu areas, and in the Amantuo: Bekwai, Nsuta and Kokofu. Attempts by British officials such as Capt. Lees and Dr. Gouldsbury were not entirely effective in stopping the fighting between Kumasi and her former dependencies. Claridge, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 186-199. See also Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell 'Our Relation with the Ashantees,' in Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute, V (1873-74), pp. 84-91.

[144]Bantama stool historians. This episode was not revealed when John Agyeman-Duah was recording Bantama stool history. There was a Bantamahene, Bafuo Awua II, who was enstooled during Karikari's time and "reigned up to the time of Nana Mensah Bonsu." His successor was Bafuo Awua III, who was enstooled during the reign of King Prempeh I. (Bantama stool history IAS/AS 39, p. 11. It was during this interim period that Awua Nansahene was put into power by Mensa.

the other Bantama chiefs and the Bantama people into rebellion against the Asantehene. The Bantama

> people went to the Asantehene's house at Apremanso, untied Kwabena Awua from the log to which he was chained and removed him to Atwima. Due to Mensa Bonsu's violations of Asante political traditions other chiefs rebelled against him, forcing him to abdicate the Golden Stool. Following his abdication the Bantama people destooled Awua Nansahene and re-enstooled their rightful ruler Kwabena Awua. The disgraced Awua Nansahene was sent back to his village at Tepa--about fifty miles from Kumasi on Guaso road.[145]

Kwabena Awua exercised his power by playing a prominent role in the election of Prince Kofi Agyeman as Asantehene Kwaku Dua II.[146] Thus while the Asantehene could interfere in stool politics, the stool subjects could, and often did, question and resist such interference. In this case it did not matter that the first Bantamahene was Osei Tutu's servant, who by implication was expected to faithfully obey his master's (and the master's successor's) will. What the stool family and subjects questioned was the master's right to act against the traditional political norm that once stools

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[145]Bantama Stool Historians. This tradition was cross-checked with Bantama Akyeamehene Kwadwo Asabre. Kwabena Awua had been imprisoned by the Asantehene together with his mother. From the time he was unchained by Bantama people until the time of his re-enstoolment he was hidden at Nyirehene village. Kwabena's brother, whom he succeeded, was Amankwatia--the Bantamahene who was shot in battle by the British at Amoafo near Bekwai in the 1874 Anglo-Asante War.

[146]His reign was terminated by death from smallpox forty days after he succeeded to the Golden Stool. Ibid. The Samanghene Stool historians. He also actively supported the candidacy of Prempeh I to succeed Kwaku Dua II.

such as adehyemmadwa were created, the stool family and elders had the right to elect and destool the successor, without interference from the Asantehene. When both Kwaku Dua II and Prempeh I sought the support of the Bantamahene, they promised to respect this political principle of the division of power between the two parties.

Although the other eighteen adehyemmadwa stools were not as powerful as Bantamahene, yet their influence and stature assured them significant political offices in Asante state. Closely connected with, and similar to, Bantama stool is the Akwamuhene's stool. It is much older than Bantama and is named for the army contingent which accompanied Osei Tutu from Akwamu under the leadership of Okyeame Anum Asamoa, the linguist of Ansa Sasraku. In reorganizing his new army, Osei Tutu consolidated the Asafo troops of Kumasi with the contingent from Akwamu and renamed the newly reconstituted fekuo Akwamu.[147] Of the total eighteen adehyemmadwa stools, Obiri Yeboa created one,[148] Osei Tutu

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[147]Akwamu Stool history IAS/AS 38. See also discussion of Akwamu stool in chapter III. One major difference between Bantama and Akwamu stools is that the former cannot intermarry with the royal members of the Asantehene's family. Tradition provided by Bantama and Akwamu stool historians.

[148]Ampabame stool IAS/AS 144. This stool was created for Nana Nketia Obirempong, whose sister, Nana Nyako had married Obiri Yeboa. She bore him Nana Sabin, who became the first Akyeampimhene.

ten,[149] Opoku Ware two,[150] Osei Kwadwo one,[151] Osei Bonsu three,[152] and Fredua Agyeman one.[153]

The large number of stools in this category created during Osei Tutu's time, and the power invested in them, compared with the stools founded by his successors in the same group leads one to conclude that most of the powerful political positions in Asante were established under Osei Tutu. Only one of the ten stools he created swears the oath of allegiance with the Ahwehweba sword; the rest use the Mpomponsuo sword. Of the two created by Opoku Ware, one uses Mpomponsuo and the other Ahwehweba; the occupants of the two stools created by Osei Kwadwo and Fredua Agyeman use Mpomponsuo; but only one of the three created by Osei Bonsu used Mpomponsuo.[154]

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[149]Bantamahene, Akwamuhene, Bosomuru Fobem Okyeame IAS/AS 174; Akwaboahene IAS/AS 17; Sanahene, op.cit., Bantama-Baamuhene IAS/AS 54; Akroponghene IAS/AS 199; Nsumankwahene IAS/AS 22; Trede IAS/AS 149; and Boakye Yam Kumaa Kyeame IAS/AS 2.

[150]Abrafohene IAS/AS 27 and Gyase IAS/AS 15.

[151]Boakye Yam Panin Okyeame IAS/AS 73.

[152]Ano Panin Okyeame IAS/AS 142; Asantre-Adankwame IAS/AS 130 and Akankade linguist IAS/AS 75.

[153]Boadu linguist IAS/AS 59.

[154]See references on these stools cited in the preceding paragraph. Boadu Kyeame was a low Ahwehweba rank stool until 1961, when it was raised to Mpomponsuo rank to take over the functions performed by Butuakwa Kyeame, whose Mpomponsuo rank stool was abolished in the same year. Normally every senior or Mpomponsuo rank linguist at the Asantehene's court has an assistant and in this instance Boadu was assistant to

The origin of these stools is similar to that of the abosuadwa and ahenemmadwa stools in that they were created in response to expanding Asante military and administrative needs. Also, the people for whom the stools were created were not mere slaves whom the king wanted to use to strengthen his power against his internal opponents. The first candidates for the stool were faithful servants, who rendered their service to the state through Otumfuo or Asante Kotoko, or individuals with distinguished leadership qualities and kinship ties with people already holding important stools. The Trede stool is a good example. The ancestor of this stool, Nana Nuben, migrated with a large retinue from Denkyera to Kumasi via Kokofu, where one of the Kokofuhene married his sister Nana Adjubi. When he got to Kumasi he soon impressed the first Asantehene with his fighting powers, so much so that a stool was created for him under Bantamahene, "The King having at a subsequent date realized Nana Nuben and his followers to be great fighting men thus placed them under Kronti Division of his new regimental organization."[155] Thus the new Tredehene got his stool for his military prowess and also because of his

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Butuakwa stool was re-established following the 1966 coup and the release of Bafuo Akoto from detention.

[155]IAS/AS 149, p. 1.

sister's marriage to Osei Tutu's relative the Kokofu-hene.[156]

Another interesting stool within Kyidom fekuo is the Akropong. Nana Ansre, for whom this stool was created, was a long-time faithful servant of Osei Tutu, not only in Denkyera but also in Akwamu and Kumasi. During Osei Tutu's initial military preparations "to wage war against the Dormahene who was a menace to him and had caused the death of his granduncle Obiri Yeboah as a result of the skirmish at Suntresu,"[157] he created Bantama for Amankwatia Panin in the "morning and then created in the evening of the same day the Ansre stool in the Kyidom Division . . ."[158] The Akroponghene was assigned to the rearguard fekuo which kept "close guard of the King at the battlefield."[159] When the Asante state was not at war, the Akroponghene and his followers lived in an area through which passed the old Gyaman-Kumasi road and acted as Asantehene's Okwansrani (King's scout) "to report to him in case of

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[156]Although Agyeman-Duah describes this stool as "a stool of matrilineal descent" this is not borne out by a close scrutiny of the genealogies of the stool occupants: the first two Tredehene were brothers, the third was a nephew, the relationship of the fourth to the preceding three is not indicated. The others are simply described as grandsons of the stool. Further tradition on the fourth Tredehene would be essential before a firm conclusion could be drawn on these "grandson" successors. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[157]IAS/AS 199, p. 2.

[158]Ibid., p. 3. [159]Ibid.

any invasion by the enemy."[160] The succession to this stool was passed down to family members--sons or brothers--of Akroponghene until the time of Asantehene Kofi Karikari, when one Kwame Adjeipong (Agyeipong) ". . . a stool dependent at the King's court was appointed to the stool as a result of faithful service rendered to the King."[161] Part of this service to the king and state was his gallant participation in the Hwem war fought between Asante and Togo in the late 1860's, and whose overall Asante leader was Gyasehene Opoku Frefre. Agyeipong was later destooled and succeeded by Nana Safo Anwona, a son of the stool. This was probably not one of Agyeipong's sons, but the son of the past Akroponghene. Hence the stool would seem to revert to the original patrilineal family which had provided the stool occupants since its creation. The Akroponghene supported Prempeh I's candidacy for the Golden Stool against Prince Atweneboana and participated in post-enstoolment campaigns waged against Atweneboana's supporters.[162]

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[160] Ibid. Okwansrani (Pl. Nkwansranfuo) comes from two Twi words--okwan 'way, road, path' and osrani 'soldier.' See Christaller, op. cit., pp. 280 and 477 respectively. Other nkwansrafuo also acted as spies and intelligence agents for areas farther away from Asante proper. Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah.

[161] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[162] Ibid. For background to this struggle see 'Report by Mr. Brandon Kirby to Coomassie and the interior Provinces of the Ashanti Kingdom Jan. 3-April 2, 1884' in ADM 1/2/374; See also numerous

Bantama-Baamu is another Mpomponsuo rank stool which Osei Tutu created for reasons similar to those leading to the creation of the aforementioned adehyemmadwa. According to tradition Bantama-Baamu stool and the other seven Poduo stools were created in response to Kumasi military needs:

> It is said that the King created these Gunmen or Abrempong, who were all resident within vicinity of the Bantamahene with a view to resisting any attack or siege of the enemy.[163]

And for Baamuhene:

> Traditionally the Baamuhene does not take to field for war, because he is the watchman of the sacred resting place of the Ashanti kings.[164]

The first occupant of this stool had a unique relationship with Kumasi rulers before the stool was created for him. Nana Safo Pasuampa was an old resident of the Bantama area, where he hunted, selling his meat from a simple meat store at Bantama. His store was well stocked, which was apparently unusual among meat dealers, for as a recognition of his accomplishment he was nicknamed Pasuampa, meaning that meat was always available at his store.[165] According to tradition,

> . . . this hunter was very generous and liberal to King Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye, prior to his appointment as Baamuhene of the King . . . whenever the King sent some of his household servants

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letters in ADM 11/1733, ADM 1/9/3; ADM 11/1482.

[163] IAS/AS 54, p. 3. [164] Ibid.

[165] Ibid., p. 2; Nana Owusu Ansah.

> to buy meat for his personal use, this man, Safo Pasuampa, refused to take the King's money, but just sent to the King the quantity required without charge. Okomfo Anokye, it is said, was treated in the same manner.[166]

It was partly in recognition of this generosity that the King, on the advice of Okomfo Anokye, decided to create a stool for Nana Safo Pasuampa. Okomfo Anokye recognized that since Bantamahene Amankwatia Panin was required to reside at Bantama to guard that region against possible invasion by the regrouped Domaa army, it was essential to create another stool for one of the oldest residents of that region, and to rank him second in command.[167]

This move was significant for several political and military reasons. First, Safo Pasuampa's knowledge of the terrain was invaluable in case of enemy counter-attack against Kumasi. Second, the people under the command of Safo Pasuampa served a useful, though limited, function in the Kumasi economy.[168] Third,

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[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid., pp. 1-3.

[168] There is reason to assume that Safo Pasuampa was an important Ohene in Kumasi politics. According to tradition we know that there was a village "near the present area of the National Cultural Centre" and "The man responsible for this village was called Osafo" (Ibid., p. 1). The word village or town has been used by various writers in connection with Asante to refer to what the Asante call kuro. Besides, the person who rules a village is generally referred to as an Odekuro, not Osafo, which is a term reserved from important rulers with the rank of Ohene or Obrempong. Information provided by several elders in Kumasi and Mampong.

Pasuampa's friendliness towards Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye might have been a diplomatic move to avoid provoking the Kumasi rulers who could have taken up arms against him, as they had done against Tafohene, Amakomhene and Adontenhene. Thus the wise Osei decided to use this friendship to integrate this area with his emerging state. Fourth, Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye, who were also looking for a sacred burial ground for the remains of the previous ruler, decided to locate it in Pasuampa's area and to make him the head mausoleum caretaker, in charge of pouring libations to the souls of departed kings. Fifth, Nana Pasuampa's kinship relationship with the Ejisu royal lineage was an important factor that Osei and Anokye could not have overlooked.[169] Succession to this stool has been restricted to the brothers, sons and grandsons of the first Baamuhene and his successors. As more kings of Asante died, more positions for priests were created under Baamuhene "to serve the souls of the departed kings by performing the customary rites on Mondays and Thursdays, presumably the ember days after the celebrations of Akwasedae and Awukudae respectively."[170]

Within the Bantama fekuo there is another adehyemmadwa stool which is one of the seven Kronti

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[169] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[170] Ibid., pp. 6-8; also see Rattray, Ashanti, Chs. V-IX dealing with these rituals.

Gunmen (Abirempong) known as Kronti Atuo Nson.[171] This stool was created in order to strengthen the Kronti fekuo before the Asante-Domaa campaign at Suntresu. Nana Brefo Apaw, for whom the stool was created, was a truly brave warrior. He took part in the Domaa campaign until the latter were defeated and their leader beheaded by the victorious Asante; he actively participated in the Feyiase battle against Ntim Gyakari; most important, he was dispatched, together with other Asante Ahene, to pursue the Sefwihene Abiri Moro, who had ransacked Kumasi while the main Asante army was fighting in Akim at Penimase.[172] As with the last two stools discussed, the succession to first Ohene passed to a brother and then to either the brothers, sons or grandsons of his successors.[173] Again this is important because it reveals and strengthens what this author believes is a notable characteristic of Asante stools (except esomdwa)--that once the stool was created, even for a faithful servant, if it were an important stool politically and administratively it tended to be considered the possession of the original holder's descendants (matrilineal or patrilineal). Such a family

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[171] IAS/AS 54, p. 8.

[172] The other Ahene who accompanied Akwaboahene in this mission were Hiahene Oheneba Sabin, Buaso Odikro, Nkawiepaninhene Twum, the Nyinahinihene, and Bari Offianohene. Ibid. See also IAS/AS 154 and IAS/AS 39.

[173] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

considered itself to have an inherent claim to occupy such a stool. This principle was well known in Asante and apparently accepted by both the stool families and the Asantehene or, in the Amantuo level, by the Amanhene. Deviation from this norm was the exception rather than the rule.

Unlike Akwaboa and the previously discussed adehymmadwa stools, where military considerations were a primary factor, the remaining stools in this category were created by Osei Tutu for slightly different purposes. He created Nsumankwahene stool for Nana Kwagyan Atuomtia. This stool had full responsibility for caring for Obosom which they had brought from Akwamu before Osei Tutu became the Asantehene.[174] According

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[174]According to Christaller, op. cit., obosom is a 'titular or guardian spirit of a town or family; imaginary spirits, subordinate to God, worshiped or consulted by the natives, generally called fetishes by Europeans, though the term fetish would better be restricted to asuman, or, to avoid confusion not be used at all.' (p. 43) Nsumankwahene is probably derived from three Twi words: suman 'charm, amulet, talisman, worn as remedy or preservative against evils or mischief, such as diseases and witchcraft, consisting or composed of various things, as feathers, hair, or teeth of various animals, beads, scraps of leather or paper inscribed with mystic characters &c. and tied round some limb or hung about the neck; any protecting power, including the abosom' ibid., p. 483. The second word is akoa (pl. nkoa) 'servant or subject' ibid., p. 240 and the third, ohene 'king, prince, chief,' ibid., p. 171. Thus Nsumankwahene would mean the chief of the servants or subjects who are responsible for protective objects, such as talismans, and protective powers, such as guardian spirits. See also IAS/AS 22, p. 3. Rattray, Ashanti, op. cit., Chs. XIII-IX.

to Nana Kwadwo Domfe Kyera,[175] Nana Atuomtia was a Kokofu man who accompanied Osei Tutu to Akwamu. While in Akwamu, Nana Atuomtia went towards Hwem (Togoland) and "got some aduro (medicine) and an obosom from bosomfuo people there. Then he brought this bosom back to Akwamu and used to consult it and predict future events and their outcome before he advised Osei Tutu. This Domfe is still here in Kumasi under the custody of Nsumankwahene--though it is kept in Asantehene's palace."[176]

When Osei Tutu and Nana Atuomtia returned to Kumasi, the former logically appointed the latter to be the head caretaker of this obosom, built a new village for him at Kumasi and forbade him to leave the capital. As Kumasi in that period was constantly conducting expansion campaigns, the Otumfuo could not risk having Nana Atuomtia back in Kokofu when he needed to consult the Hwem obosom about the next campaign. Also, since Nana Atuomtia was expected to use this obosom to "prepare medicine for war"[177] and for

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[175]He is the Nsumankwahene stool historian and also a Nsumankwani. As he explained to me, nsumankwani means a medicine man and Domfe is another word for obosom. This elder, born about three years after "Toto" war (Anglo-Asante War of 1874) C.1877, is the son of Yaw Domfe, the brother of Nsumankwahene Kwasi Domfe. When Domfe is used as someone's name it means bosomfuo, that is, the one who takes care of obosom.

[176]Ibid. See also Nsumankwahene Stool History IAS/AS 22, p. 1.

[177]Ibid., p. 2.

purification ceremonies, it was imperative that he remain in Kumasi at all times.

From the close working relationship between Nana Atuomtia and Okomfo Anokye, it appears that the first Nsumankwahene was Okomfo Anokye's designated successor. This was confirmed by the fact that when Atuomtia died, he was succeeded by his son Nana Asabre. At this time, according to tradition, Okomfo Anokye "charged the Nsumankwahene with the special responsibility of handing over the key of state to him and further enacted the . . . code of laws, infringement of which he considered as taboo to the state."[178] Finally, Okomfo Anokye gave his bodua (fly whisk made from a cow's or horse's tail) to Nana Asabre, conferring on him legitimate power to take over his spiritual, ritual and medicinal powers to "remove or cleanse evil spirits" from people or places within the country with the use of this Bodua and obosom. Nana Asabre was also to perform purification ceremonies for people who violated any of the national taboos or codes given by Anokye, such as the one against sexual intercourse in the bush.[179] It also became Nana Asabre's (and his

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[178] Ibid.

[179] This act was a national taboo because it was a serious desecration of the earth, and if the culprit was not purified the Asase abosom (earth god) could punish the nation through crop failures, pasture failure, drought and other earth-related calamities. The Asante believed the earth was the source of life; that is why even today the Asante call on Asase Yaa (earth

successors') role to pour libation at the Dwabraim (a place of national assembly) during national ceremonies and festivals. As Okomfo Anokye was the chief priest and medicine man in the Asante nation, when he died "all fetish priests and medicine men in the State were requested to serve the King under the Nsumankwahene," and his bodua became Nsumankwahene's "symbol of authority."[180]

Nsumankwahene's functions, though principally religious in nature, did not exclude other important extra-religious activities. During Asantehene Osei Kwadwo's era, Nana Asabre fought against Okye, a Sodo conspirator who gathered his followers in Kumasi against the Asantehene, and defeated him, capturing his Asese Horn and his gun for Osei Kwadwo. Furthermore, when Nsutahemaa Siabura reported to Osei Kwadwo the assassination of one of the two royals contesting for succession to that stool, the Otumfuo "appointed Nana Asabre, the Nsumankwahene, to go to Nsuta and see that order was maintained. Nana Asabre arrived at Nsuta with his armed men as directed by the king and fought mercilessly with those conspirators and was victorious."[181] For his participation in this war

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god) when pouring libation before breaking ground for planting, building a house, burying the deceased, etc. Tradition provided by Nana Kwadwo Domfe Kyere.

[180] IAS/AS 22, p. 2.

[181] Ibid., p. 3. Traditions collected by Rattray

the Nsumankwahene was given several villages by the grateful Nsutahemaa. During the reign of Asantehene Fredua Agyeman, Nsumankwahene Nana Domfe Ketewa was appointed to fight against King Yabo, in northern Ghana, who had insulted the Otumfuo. Later, with reinforcements from Anantahene Asamoa Nkwanta and Nseniehene Appia Agyei, the Asante forces defeated Yabo.[182] Nsumankwahene Kwabena Agyie accompanied Gyasehene Poku Frefre (also known as Buabasa--the one who breaks bones) to the Hwem war and beheaded Anim Kumi, taking his sword which is a trophy of Nsumankwa stool to this day. Again, during the Asibe war, Nsumankwahene Kwasi Domfe actively supported Prempeh I against his enemies in his quest for the Golden Stool.[183]

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in Nsuta contain more details about this incident. Ashanti Law . . ., op. cit., pp. 259-260.

[182] IAS/AS 22, pp. 5-6. The appointment of Nsumankwahene against Yabo was probably influenced by Asante's knowledge that Yabo was a skillful magician who also consulted local Muslim leaders in his fight against Asante. This is military intelligence that could not have been overlooked by Asante spies. Besides, there was a contingent of Muslims at Kumasi brought there by Asantehene Osei Kwame and directly under the Nsumankwahene as well as Muslim traders who knew Daboya-Yabo's main trading entrepot well. Indeed, when Yabo was finally defeated the Asante army captured Kramo Tia, who was Yabo's "very powerful Kramo or Moslem, who was gifted in Koran and worked miracles for him . . . When Kramo Tia arrived in Kumasi he became a "permanent Moslem consultant of the Asantehene. He was captured with his two wives, namely Wurukye and Awuro Kyaah. Kramo Tia became a prominent citizen of Kumasi. His descendants have multiplied in great numbers and are among the Moslem who stay in Suame." Ibid., p. 6.

[183] Ibid., p. 7.

Succession to this stool has been from father to male descendants of Nana Atuomtia Kwagyan. Since the Nsumankwahene is expected to pass on his talents to his sons, he is barred by custom from marrying any female royals of the Golden Stool. He can, however, marry the Asantehene's daughter.[184]

The Bosomuru Fabem and Boakye Yam Kumaa stools were founded to fill an administrative need for Akyeame (linguists) at the Asantehene's courts. At the time of the formation of Asante Union there was only one senior linguist, who was also a mamber of Oyoko clan. When the state functions increased and more stools were created, the Asantehene founded linguist stools.[185] The Okyeame played an important part in the Asante political system:

> Traditionally all the various linguists of Asantehene belong to different clans and represent the views of the different class as the occasion demands. These linguists act as spokesmen between the king and chiefs. It is also quite customary for a chief of a particular clan, who is so entitled, to pass through a specific linguist before calling at the King's House for a parley. One of the principal duties of a linguist is to

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[184]Tradition provided by Nsumankwahene Stool historian--Nana Kwadwo Domfe Kyere.

[185]This senior linguist, Boanse Kofi, complained that the court proceeds were not fairly divided. But since the Asantehene could not have fought with a fellow Oyoko "brother," Nana Kofi was promoted to clan head of one of the three Oyoko branches--Atutue--and the Akyeamehene's position was given to a non-clan member, Kyeame Safi. IAS/AS 23, pp. 2-3; see also IAS/AS 43.

> serve as a letter bearer between the King and his chiefs, etc., and of course other visitors who call at the King's House for consultation.[186]

In his role as an intermediary between the Asantehene and Birempong (paramount chiefs) his function is that of a liaison officer or the paramount chief's friend at the Otumfuo's court.[187] Okyeame Fabem, the first Bosomuru Fabem Okyeame, who had migrated from Denkyera before the battle of Feyiase, was made a liaison officer for several clans within Gyase Fekuo,--including Samanghene, and Dadesoabahene. Eventually Gyasehene (Buabasahene), Kronkohene and Anantahene were added to his responsibility.[188] As a symbol of his authority he was given Asempa Etia or the linguists' staff. Furthermore, he was given the additional duties of performing ritual ceremonies for the Bosomuru sword which the Asantehene used in special ceremonies.[189]

Kyeame Boakye Yam Kumaa stool was originally created by Osei Tutu for Nana Duku Adadie, who was one of the soldiers sent by Akwamuhene Ansa Sasraku to accompany Osei Tutu from Akwamu to Kumasi. It appears that initially this stool ranked higher than it does

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[186] IAS/AS 23, p. 1. See also Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., pp. 65, 77. The Okyeame was an important officer during the trial and prosecution proceedings (Rattray, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

[187] Ibid., pp. 93-96.

[188] IAS/AS 174.

[189] Ibid. Tradition also provided by the present Fabem Kyeame Kwaku Owusu II and his stool historian.

now.[190] The change took place during Fredua Agyeman's reign, when this Okyeame stool was consolidated under Boakye Yam Panin stool in the Gyase Fekuo from Akyeampimhene Fekuo.[191] When male descendants on the patrilineal line were not available for succession, grandnephews were elected to the stool. For example, Kyeame Asase Asa was "grandson of the stool in the maternal sense,"[192] and the present Kyeame Boakye Yam Kumaa is the son of Nana Afua Du, the Obaa Panin (Queen mother) of this stool.[193]

Besides these two linguists' stools there was the Sanahene stool, which Osei Tutu created for Nana Amoah Pagya. He was charged with the caretakership of the state weights used for the national currency--gold dust. According to the tradition given to Agyeman-Duah by Sanahene Kwadwo Nyantakyi I, who had been on this stool for forty years,

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[190]Tradition reveals that he was recognized as Obirempong by Osei Tutu which he is not nowadays. IAS/AS 23.

[191]Ibid., p. 2. See also IAS/AS 73. Boakye Yam Kyeame who had married Ama Sewaa, the Asantehemaa, was also the father of Fredua Agyeman. The stool was vacant between the death of Boakye Yam and the time that his son Akyeampong Tia succeeded him during Asantehene Karikari's reign. As there was no mature family candidate for the stool, the logical assumption is that its functions were transferred to Boakye Yam Panin Stool.

[192]IAS/AS 23, p. 3.

[193]Ibid., Further tradition also provided by Kyeame Boakye Yam Kumaa.

> The Sanahene is the traditional or state treasurer of the Asantehene. He is responsible for weighing the Asantehene's gold dust and for the safe keeping of the Asantehene's money. He is also responsible for the purchase of articles appertaining to the Asantehene and the Golden Stool. He is responsible for weighing Asantehene's gold before anything is bought for use at the King's palace. The Sanahene renders the account to the Asantehene himself; although the Gyasehene is the Head clan chief to which the Sanahene belongs he does not take instructions from the Gyasehene with regard to money matters.[194]

Nana Amoa Pagya was Osei Tutu's Sanahene before the Denkyera campaign. He continued to occupy the stool until his death, in the time of Opoku Ware, after which his son Fosu Krah succeeded him. The Sanahene is assisted in his job as the King's treasurer by sub-treasurers or Afotuosanhene.[195] The Afutuosanhene were mainly responsible for handling abotene weights or smaller weights up to one peredwan--ƐG8.

The Sanahene had other functions which indicate the development that led Osei to increase this stool's importance in his new state. A good relationship between Osei and his Obirempong states was important. To

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[194]IAS/AS 41, p. 1. Wilks briefly discusses this stool, but his list of its occupants differs from the one collected by Agyeman-Duah and from that obtained by this author. It is unfortunate that Wilks does not cite the "miscellaneous documentary sources" on which his list is based. (Wilks, 'Aspects of Bureaucratization . . .,' op. cit., p. 222.

[195]The Afutuosanhene are so called because in traditional times these weights were carried in a leather bag known as a fotuo. State treasurers or other individuals who bought or sold gold or used it for making ornaments carried such a bag. Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah.

maintain it, the Asantehene was expected to donate money during funerals. It was the Asantehene who was sent to accompany these gifts and to make sure that nothing was pilfered. It was also the Sanahene's responsibility to oversee repairs of the King's gold regalia--gold rings, gold guns, gold swords, etc. He weighed the gold necessary for the repairs, and he or one of his trusted assistants stayed with the goldsmith while the repairs were made. When penalty money had to be collected out of Kumasi, he or his deputy went to test the purity of the penalty gold.[196] Monetary transactions between the Asantehene and other stool holders were supervised by the Sanahene and Afutuosanhene.

While much skill and training were required for the position of Sanahene, not just anyone in Asante who was qualified could be given the position. The occupants of this stool were mostly the sons of previous Sanahene, with a few exceptions. Wilks gives the first

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[196] Ibid. Part of the training of the Sanahene and his deputies was in metallurgy. They were expected to be able to distinguish different grades of gold, the amount of impurities in each grade and the weight of various types of gold. When a considerable amount of gold was involved, goldsmiths were sent to accompany the Afutuosanhene. For example, when the Denkyerahene sent a large brass pan to Kumasi to be filled with tribute gold, he sent a goldsmith with the Afutuosanhene. (Ibid.) Checking gold impurities was a necessary precaution, as the complaint of exchanging or selling impure gold was a common one in the trading accounts between the Africans and Europeans along the Gold Coast.

Sanahene as Dadie,[197] but this name does not appear either in the traditions given by Sanahene Kwadwo Nyantakyi I, or in the traditions collected by this author. Since Wilks does not cite his source, it is difficult to ascertain Dadie's kinship relationship with the succeeding Sanahene, Sanahene Kwadwo Yeboa, nor is Kwaku Dadie's relationship with the first two clear although Kwaku Dadie was succeeded by his son Sanaa Poku.[198] When Yaw Dadie (also known as Yaw Brefi) was mortally wounded in the Yaa Asantewa war, the British appointed a non-kin member called Agyobene to the stool.[199] The last non-relative to occupy the stool was Sanahene Kwadwo Nyantakyi Ababio.[200] The Sahahene stool could have been given to qualified goldsmiths or Afotuosanfuo officials, but this would have violated the tradition norms connected with Adehyemmadwa stools

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[197]Wilks, Aspects of Bureaucratization . . ., op. cit., p. 222.

[198]IAS/AS 41, p. 2.

[199]Tradition provided by Sanahene Kwadwo Nyantaki III and his Afotuosanhene Kofi Tio.

[200]When Kwadwo Nyantakyi I died on April 7, 1967, the stool was offered to his son Kwame Dwatoa, who refused it. The stool was then given to Kwadwo Nyantakyi Ababio, who was married to Nana Krapeena, the daughter of Asampohene Oheneba Kwadwo Afodjuo, the son of Asantehene Kofi Karikari. He only held the stool for two years. Following his destoolment, he was succeeded by the present Sanahene, the younger son of Kwadwo Nyantakyi I.

Further Stool Development in Post Osei Tutu Era

The stools created in this group by Osei Tutu's successors do not reflect any radical change in Asante's history. His successor, Opoku Ware I, created Gyase stool for Oheneba Adusei Atwenewa, his son by Nana Abuodua Tere.[201] The Gyasehene became the head of the newly created fekuo within the Gyase (or household) retinue. Although he was not the most senior member of this fekuo, he became its main spokesman when necessary during the festivals, ceremonies and Asante Kotoko assembly meetings. The other four groups which made up this fekuo were headed by Samanghene,[202] Kronkohene,[203] Dadesoabahene,[204] and Anantahene.[205]

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[201] IAS/AS 15; Tradition also provided by Gyasehene Nana Poku Mensah Ababio II and his sister Nana Adwoa Adubaa. This tradition is also in agreement with that given to me by Nana Owusu Ansah. Wilks indicates that the first Gyasehene was Asimadu; the other three sources which I have used to reconstruct the earlier history of this stool are not in agreement with Wilks. If he had indicated his source, this confusion could have been cleared up. Wilks, 'Aspects of Bureaucratization, op. cit., p. 221.

[202] According to tradition he is "the constitutional head of the king's Gyase division . . . he is not allowed to express his views when Otumfuo sits in State. Consequently, the Gyasehene, who has been given this privilege by the King, is more or less recognised as the head of the Gyase division, whereas in fact he is not." IAS/AS 52, p. 1.

[203] An abosuadwa stool which was created by Osei Tutu before Denkyera was for his escort Nana Adom. IAS/AS 100.

[204] IAS/AS 12.

[205] This stool was created by Opoku Ware I for one Nana Fosu Twitwi Akumaa, who fought and defeated

Of the five groups which make up the Gyase fekuo, "each group is independent on its own but they constitute the Gyase Division of Asantehene."[206] Each of them has several Abirempong under its supervision. The group that belongs to Gyasehene proper is also known as Buabasa, and the supervisory functions entrusted to Gyasehene are restricted to the members of this group. Thus the Buabasahene's position, once created, did not become a centralizing post for administrative policy decision or coordination, any more than it did for Bantamahene, or Adontenhene, or Akyeampimhene in their respective stools. These leaders respected their Abirempong rights in recognition of the intricate traditional relationship between the fekuo head and his Abirempong. Most Abirempong of Mpomponsuo rank had the right to raise important matters with the Asantehene or Asanteman without necessarily having consulted their fekuo head.[207] But as a matter of courtesy and routine, they were expected to inform him

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Asinhene Apotoe when he tried to stop Fosu from delivering three hundred guns from the coast to Kumasi. As a result of this boldness, and on the advice of Okomfo Anokye, Opoku Ware created this military stool for the possible opposition of Bantamahene, should the Bantamahene pose any military threat. Several chiefs were assigned to this Ananta stool. IAS/AS 3. Tradition also provided by Anantahene Appia Denkwa.

[206] IAS/AS 100, p. 1

[207] See Mpomponsuo rank stool histories collected by Agyeman-Duah.

of such matters, so as to avoid possible conflicts, which would be construed as lack of confidence in the fekuo head. The fekuo head's power extended to, and was limited to, chairing the overall fekuo council meetings and acting as liaison in the fekuo's external affairs.[208]

The Gyase stool was originally an abosuadwa stool. Nana Adusei Atwenewa's successor was his nephew Nana Ntim Panin.[209] This stool was changed from abosuadwa to adehyemmadwa during the reign of Asantehene Osei Bonsu. After the Asante-Gyaman war with King Adinkra in 1818, the aging Gyasehene, Nana Opoku Frefre, started to display extreme emotional anxieties in public. When the Asantehene asked him why, Opoku Frefre replied that "it was because he did not have any sisters or female relatives whose sons could succeed him."[210] Osei Bonsu, was was very compassionate and sensitive to his Abirempong and especially to the brave and distinguished Frefre, said that in recognition of the unusual circumstances, he would convert this stool from abosuadwa to adehyemmadwa so

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[208]Bantamahene stool historians, Gyasehene Poku Mensa Ababio II and his sister, Samanghene stool historians and Adontenhene and his elders. See also Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., Ch. 12.

[209]Tradition given by Gyasehene Poku Mensa Ababio II and Nana Adwoa Adabaa. Since this information conflicted with one important source, I consulted Nana Owusu Ansah, who verified that Ntim Panin was the second Gyasehene.

[210]Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah.

that Poku Frefre's male descendants could inherit it. According to Nana Owusu Ansah, the Asantehene said: "Saa na woka die mede akonua no ne kye wo kotie," which means literally "If that is what you are saying I 'dash' (give as a gift) the stool to your penis." This meant that "any male person born of you will be eligible to succeed you."[211] This rule has been followed to the present day, and with the exception of Kwame Tia (Gyasehene for a short period after the Yaa Asantewa war) all the other occupants of this stool have been descendants of Poku Frefre. Kwame Tia was appointed to the stool partly because he was married to Ama Sewaa, the daughter of Asantehene Kofi Karikari, and to Afua Hemaa and Opi Dwumo, both daughters of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu.[212]

The second adehyemmadwa stool created by Opoku Ware I was Abrafohene (head executioner) stool, which held Ahwehweba rank. The founding of this stool, which was not initially attached to any fekuo,[213] signified the increase of Abrafuo as the Asante state developed

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[211]Nana Owusu Ansah. This is the second stool whose rule of inheritance has been permanently affected. The other is the Akwamu stool discussed earlier. IAS/AS 38.

[212]Tradition provided by Gyasehene Poku Mensa Ababio II and Adwoa Adabaa.

[213]IAS/AS 27. Nowadays, however, they are classified together with Adum fekuo.

and the need for an individual to supervise them. Such an increase is not unusual, given Opoku Ware's long reign (1720-1750) and the many wars he fought in all directions from Kumasi. It also indicates a shift towards executing prisoners and criminals rather than disposing of them on the coast as slaves.[214] Besides acting as executioners, the Abrafo also recited the deeds of past kings. Unlike the Kwadwomfuo, the minstrels, the Abrafo did not sing their praise of the king. Furthermore the reciting was generally done by a junior person or by apprentice executioners.[215] The Abrafo also guarded the Asantehene.[216] Although this is a low-ranking stool and could be grouped with esomdwa stools, the succession was restricted to male descendants of the first Abrafohene, Asuman Kofi.[217] It cannot be argued that qualification for this office depended on merit, because executing criminals did not require any special technical knowledge that might have been monopolized only by descendants of Asuman Kofi.

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[214]Trade between Kumasi and coast during Opoku Ware's time was not as good as in the preceding decades of the eighteenth century. Priestley and Wilks, op. cit., pp. 85-88.

[215]Nana Owusu Ansah.

[216]During the procession or other festivals and ceremonies in Kumasi one can still see them with their daggers at the front of the procession trying to make way for the official party.

[217]IAS/AS 27, pp. 1-2.

Four of the remaining stools in this group are linguists stools. This shows that the expansion of Asante state called for more liaison officers to facilitate communication with outside areas, either in diplomacy or in litigation. These linguist stools--Boakye Yam Panin, Boadu, Ano Panin and Ankankade--will be discussed in more detail later.[218] The fifth linguist stool is the Butuakwa stool.[219]

Asantre-Adankwame stool is the last adehyemmadwa stool we shall discuss. According to tradition this stool was created by Asantehene Osei Bonsu for Nana Nko Yaw, who had migrated to Asante from Fanteland.

> The chief Nko, no doubt one of the principal chiefs at the coast, is said to have migrated with a large retinue from the coast to serve the Asantehene. He migrated with his own ancestral stool and one thousand traditional gunmen to serve under the King of Ashanti . . .[220]

The duties of the newly created stool were similar to those of the Bantama-Baamuhene, through whom Nana Nko was expected to serve the Asantehene.[221] But if we

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[218]IAS/AS 73, IAS/AS 59, IAS/AS 142, IAS/AS 75.

[219]The history of this stool was not among those recorded by Agyeman-Duah under the aegis of Ashanti Research Project because at the time that most of the recording was done, the occupant of this stool, Bafuo Osei Akoto, was in jail for his role as a leader of the opposition party.

[220]IAS/AS 130, p. 1. The migration can be traced also from the unstable condition on the coast between the Asante, British and Fante.

[221]Ibid.

look beyond the Asantehene's immediate need for another assistant to the Baamuhene, the reason for the creation of this stool is clear. Osei Bonsu had decided to incorporate the new immigrants into his domain by using an old tactic that his predecessors, especially Osei Tutu, had successfully used during mass immigration from Denkyera: to create a stool and appoint their leader to it with full administrative responsibility over them. Osei Tutu's uncle, Obiri Yeboa, had created a similar administrative stool for Nana Nketia Obrempong, who had migrated from the south to Kumasi with a large retinue.[222] Obiri Yeboa was wise enough not to waste the administrative talent of a man who had been an Ohene, Domantemhene in his own region.[223] Besides, both Nana Nko Yaw's and Nana Nketia Obrempong's loyalty and willingness to serve their new overlords made it unnecessary to appoint Kumasi rulers over the new immigrants.

Such rulers would have had to work under many disadvantages. They would not know the newcomers, would not get full cooperation from them, would alienate them, and would be the targets of serious resentment, culminating with another migration from Asante.

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[222] IAS/AS 144.

[223] Another consideration which definitely influenced this appointment was that Nana Nketia Obrempong's sister Nyaako was married to Obiri Yeboa and was later to be the mother of Oheneba Sabin, the first Akyeampimhene. Ibid., pp. 2-4. See also IAS/AS 106.

But the ingenuity of the Asante rulers at times like these always prevailed. It was this ingenuity which once led the Asante monarch to stress to Dupuis the significance of effective communication, compromise and diplomacy as a means of solving conflict in lieu of resorting to weapons. This ingenuity led to the development of the Akyeame and to the important role which they played as negotiators both in and out of Asante. In performing this role they needed the assistance of the other elders--the Mpanyimfuo who occupied the major stools which we have discussed in this and previous chapters. In the next chapter we shall see how they obtained it. This was an important development, with the Akyeame, the Asantehene and Mpanyimfuo interacting in harmony, and sometimes in conflict, in the interest of good government for the Asante.

CHAPTER VI

AKYEAME AND MPANYIMFUO: ADMINISTRATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL CRISES

Diplomats played an important role in Asante politics from the early days of the development of that state. This was partly due to the fact, as was once explained by one of the Asantehene, that the Asante nation never resorted to arms until all other means of reaching a settlement amicably had failed.[1] To carry out delicate negotiations, whether foreign or domestic, there were Akyeame [sing. Okyeame] who were expected to know Asante history, the unwritten Asante constitution and traditions, so as to render informed advice in disputes. In Asante traditional politics even today, one sees an Okyeame at the Ohene's court whenever there is an important dispute between individuals or groups in his town or village, between

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[1]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 226. The Asante army which went to ask the Fante to surrender three Ahene rebels in 1816 was accompanied by Asante ambassadors. The ambassadors initially attempted to pursuade the Fante to surrender these rebels 'voluntarily in order that the whole Fante nation should not lose their lives." H. W. Daendels, op. cit., pp. 58-59.

subjects and citizens of other towns, or whenever the Ohene is receiving or sending significant messages to his counterparts, superiors or juniors in other areas. Every Asante person is entitled to a fair hearing of his complaints either locally or nationally. This is a tradition acknowledged by Osei Tutu and for which he is well remembered, as Dupuis discovered in Kumasi early in the nineteenth century:

> The wisdom as well as valour of Sai Tooto are themes on which the natives dwell with a national satisfaction; in short, he was, as they say, the great, and the good; for, in his reign, justice was ever on the alert, and the claims of his subjects listened to without distinction of rank or title.[2]

In litigation or other disputes, whenever a person felt, with good reason, that the Okyeame was partial, he could swear the great oath of Asante "on the Okyeame's head." The case of dispute must then be heard by a higher court, and if the Okyeame's partiality was proved he himself was prosecuted and fined heavily.[3] In this chapter we shall explore the origins of this office and its development in Asante government.

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[2]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 229-230.

[3]Tradition provided by stool historians, Bantama stool historians and Bantama Akyeamehene. The Okyeame swore at their installation always to tell the truth to the court. Hence when any of them became impartial he was considered to have violated his oath. Such violation was punishable by death or by lesser penalties, depending on the seriousness of the case.

Social Origins of Akyeame

An early reference to an Okyeame stool in Asante tradition indicates that the first Akyeamehene was Nana Boanse Kofi, who held this position during the formation of the Asante confederacy.[4] Nana Boanse was a member of the Atutue branch of the Oyoko clan, which had occupied the Akyeamehene's position since the time of Obiri Yeboa. When the latter died, Nana Boanse accompanied a delegation of notable Kumasi Ahene to Akwamu to call Osei Tutu to succeed his deceased uncle.[5] Nana Boanse's role was dual: first, as the Akyeamehene, he was the leader of the mission, and it was his responsibility to explain to the Akwamuhene and Osei Tutu what had happened at Kumasi. Second, as an Oyoko clansman, he could be fully trusted by Osei Tutu, who was also an Oyoko.[6] When Osei Tutu ascended to the Golden Stool, he continued to hold court to adjudicate important cases and to distribute the fees paid by litigants to the court elders forming the judicial council. However, Nana Boanse was dissatisfied with the disproportionate distribution of these fees, for the Asantehene took the

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[4] IAS/AS 32.

[5] The other Ahene who accompanied Nana Boanse Kofi were Antoahene Nana Sakodie Date and Adwumakaasehene. Ibid., see also IAS/AS 34.

[6] Tradition provided by Atutuehene Nana Opong Wadie II.

lion's share.[7] Other members as well in Asante Kotoko complained about the situation:

> The Atutuehene stated without reservation or mincing of words that he was quite aware of the fact and aggrieved by the state of affairs. The Atutuehene further stated that as chief linguist of the state he usually sat in the sun with his stock (staff) to conduct cases and the king took all the fees without giving him a farthing. Not only was the chief linguist aggrieved of this matter but almost all the chiefs of Kumasi Traditional Council had grumbled, or to be more emphatic complained against the king as to the state of affairs.[8]

As a result of this complaint, Okomfo Anokye and Osei Tutu considered the problem, with the former consulting the traditional dieties for guidance. The solution was to elevate Nana Boanse to the head of the Atutue branch of Oyoko, and to give the position of Akyeamehene to Domakwaahene Nana Safie.[9]

The reason offered by the Asantehene for giving Nana Boanse a new post was that the new position was less demanding and more comfortable. Thus according to tradition, the Asantehene ". . . directed that since the Atutuehene was of Oyoko royal blood, it was not proper for him to sit in the sun to conduct cases of a

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[7]IAS/AS 32. In Asante courts both litigants have to pay court fees--the winner or the innocent party pays aseda, which means 'thank you money,' whereas the loser or the guilty person pays the penalty or whatever is owed. Aseda is not paid only in courst but also in time that people exchange gifts or beneficial obligations. Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., op. cit., pp. 24-25, p. 301.

[8]IAS/AS 32, p. 2.

[9]Ibid., see also IAS/AS 43.

constitutional nature, but he should sit by his side or should sit near him whenever he sat in state."[10] Furthermore, in his new position the Atutuehene was to be given one peredwan (₺8) a week. This change had further repercussions in Asante politics. First, it introduced a more equitable system of sharing court-related revenues, and the Asantehene conceded that henceforth the clan heads and linguists were to get proportionate shares commensurate with their ranks. Second, the new Akyeamehene was given the "responsibility of making such apportionment."[11] Third, at the same time a system of contributing towards national debts was instituted, with the amount to be paid by each clan leader based on his share of the court proceeds.[12] Fourth, the move also minimized the

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[10]IAS/AS 32, p. 3.

[11]Ibid. The present Akyeamehene, Nana Appia Nuama II, assured the writer that he performs this function even today.

[12]An example of how this system worked was explained as follows by Samanghene and his elders. If money was to be raised by Asante Kotoko, as after funerals or other national ceremonies, all the clan heads would have their proportion. The Samanghene who is the Gyase clan head would take the figure and divide it into two halves--one for himself and the other for Buabasahene. Then Samanghene would divide his half into two equal portions, one for himself and the other for Dadesoabahene. The Samanghene would take his portion and divide it into half again. This time one half would be for Kronkohene and the other half for himself. Finally he would call all the Ahene that come directly under him and ask each to raise his appropriate share. E.g., if the Gyase clan was to raise ₺96.:

possibility of open hostility between the Oyoko and the new Akyeamehene, Nana Safie, who had not inherited all the powers enjoyed by his predecessor, because Osei Tutu had created other Akyeame to take over some of the functions previously performed by Nana Boanse.[13] Both Nana Boanse and Nana Adunya Safie played an important role of the court. As Ward has written: "The function of the Okyeame was first, to get each party to state his case; second, to pick out the essential points of fact on which the case turned; third, to get the truth on these points established by a witness acceptable to both parties."[14]

Samanghene ₺48		Buabasahene ₺48
Samanghene ₺24	Dadesoabahene ₺24	
Samanghene ₺12	Kronkohene ₺12	

Ahene coming directly under Samanghene would also raise ₺12. As of 1971, the Samanghene had about twenty-five Ahene and Adikro, and each would raise half a pound. This tradition was provided by Nana Samanghene Osei Kwaku II and his elders: Nana Yaw Gyamfi, his chief advisor; Nana Kwasi Boakye, his Kyidomhene; Opanin Kofi Baa; Opanin Kwabena Bona; Nana Kwaku Duah, his Akwamuhene; and Opanin Kwabena Oteng.

[13]Today the Asantehene has twelve linguists. IAS/AS 43, p. 1.

[14]W. E. F. Ward, Introduction in Fuller, op. cit., pp. xlii-xliii. For the role of Akyeame and organization of coastal Akan courts see John Mensah Sarbah, Fanti Customary Law, London: Wm. Clowes and Sons, 1897; J. E. Casely-Hayford, Gold Coast Native Institutions, New Impression, London: Frank Cass, 1970.

Nana Safie's background before he became the Akyeamehene is rather interesting. One of the main reasons Osei Tutu gave him the Akyeamehene's stool seems to have been his administrative experience as Domakwaihene of Kumasi. Domakwai stool, which had been founded by Obiri Yeboa for Nana Akora Nimfa, belonged to Ekuona clan. When Nana Nimpa died, he was succeeded by Nana Safie, who was not his direct descendant but was of the same clan.[15] He became the Domakwaihene within two months after he and Osei Tutu arrived in Kumasi from Akwamu. Osei Tutu appointed Safie to this post partly for his loyalty and service to him during the flight from Denkyera, and partly for his political experience in Denkyera. According to tradition Nana Safie was an Ohene in that state, but was forced to flee Denkyera when Ntim Gyakari reportedly violated Safie's wife and threatened Safie's life. As Osei Tutu had already left Denkyera, Safie followed him to Akwamu. ". . . On arrival at Akwamu Safie was received by Barima Osei Tutu with open arms. When Osei Tutu was invited by the Kumasi elders and nobles to occupy the Golden Stool, Safie went with him to Kumasi."[16] Safie's father, Nana Esonu Empanto, with

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[15] IAS/AS 43, p. 2.

[16] Ibid., p. 2. Tradition also given by Akyeamehene Appiah Nuamah II.

his followers migrated to Kumasi after his son became Domakwaihene and settled first at Nkwanta Yaa and later at Mmehemme under the Akyeamehene Boanse Kofi.[17] Thus Nana Safie came from a stool-holding family--a necessary background, was himself a stool holder before he left Denkyera, and had served for some time as Domakwaihene before his overlord appointed him to the more demanding stool of Akyeamehene.

Even without the family qualification, it would appear that Nana Safie was well qualified for his new position. As Domakwaihene he had actively participated as the head of what the Asante call mpanyimfuo ne akonua asem (or elders' deliberations in stool) for Domakwai stool. He knew the Asante traditions and history as well as the requisite politics. As Domakwaihene he had also actively participated in Asante Kotoko deliberations.[18] And in these deliberations he was able to to observe the functioning of that body, the Akyeamehene Boanse Kofi and his relationship with Otumfuo

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[17] Ibid., p. 1. Tradition provided also by Atutuehene Nana Opong Wadie II.

[18] The Domakwaihene is the second or third most important Ohene in Kyidom Fekuo. In the list of members of Kumasi traditional council at Manhyia, Kumasi, he is listed as third after Akyeampimhene. But according to both oral and written tradition, the Domakwaihene ranks second to Akyeampimhene. (IAS/AS 43, p. 1 and oral information by Akyeamehene Appiah Nuamah II.) The second position to Akyeampihene is also claimed by the Kyidomhene (see IAS/AS 158; verified by oral information from Kyidomhene Oheneba Osei Yaw.)

and other members of the Asanteman or the Kumasi oman. Hence when he asked him to succeed Nana Boanse and at the same time to keep his position as Domakwaihene, Osei Tutu believed him talented and able enough to hold both stools.[19]

Although succession to this stool is reported as abosuadwa this contention is not supported by available genealogical data. In Agyeman-Duah's detailed tradition he deals more with the earlier history of the stool, while giving no kinship relationship of stool occupants. The succession has been mixed since 1900, when Appiah Nuamah I was appointed to the stool by the British after the Yaa Asantewa war.[20] Although the stool was traditionally created for Ekuona clan and the first two occupants were members of that clan, Nana Nuamah I belonged to Agona clan.[21] When he died he was succeeded by his nephew Kofi Adu Amankwaa, who was also the son of former Akyeamehene Amankwa Nyame.[22]

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[19]IAS/AS 43, pp. 1-3.

[20]Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[21]The present Akyeamehene, Nana Appiah Nuamah II, was probably the most reluctant official that the writer interviewed in Asante. He failed to keep several appointments, and in the two he did keep, he evaded questions dealing with Safie's successors with the excuse that he did not know any details about the marriage or kinship ties. He was only willing to give such data for post-1900 Akyeamehene.

[22]IAS/AS 43, p. 5; oral tradition by Akyeamehene Appiah Nuamah II.

Nana Kofi was not Odehye of the stool, since his mother was of Agona clan, but was more readily accepted because his father and his uncle had both occupied the stool. His successor was Nana Kwame Poku Agyeman, who was a true royal of the stool.[23] When the latter was destooled for maladministration, his successor was the present Akyeamehene, Appiah Nuamah II, also a true royal of the stool.[24]

Osei Tutu created another Akyeame stool for Nana Dakompra. It appears that Nana Dakompra was given the Okyeame stool partly because of his family background, which afforded him opportunities for substantial administrative experience, and partly because of his kinship ties with Osei Tutu. Dakompra was a Denkyera aristocrat par excellence: his mother was Bensua, a daughter of one of the Denkyerahene. His father was Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari.[25] Due to a family misunderstanding Nana Dakompra left Denkyera for Kumasi. While at Kumasi, one of his daughters, Nana Kusikyi, married

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[23] Ibid.

[24] He is the son of Appiah Nuamah I with Nana Amaa Sewaa Konkroma, the daughter of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu. Ibid. Akyeamehene Appiah Nuamah II died in February, 1974.

[25] Tradition provided by the present Dakompra Kyeame Nana Yaw Adubofuo II. Cousin marriage among the Akan groups is not only preferred but actively encouraged, especially between maternal uncles', nieces and maternal uncles' sons. This minimizes inheritance friction.

Osei Tutu, and from this marriage were born two daughters, Nyaako and Yaa Pokua, whose descendants have continued to occupy this stool, and one son.[26] As if Osei Tutu's marriage to Kusikyi were not enough to ensure mutual trust with Dakompra, Osei requested the latter to swear that he would never reveal Asante secrets to Denkyerahene. Violation of this particular oath was to be punished by execution. Initially Nana Dakompra served Osei at the court. His brilliant opinions about matters under discussion inspired Osei to reward him with an Okyeame's stool. Except for one Kwasi Amoah, who was enstooled by the British after the Yaa Asantewa war, all the other holders of this stool have been nephews, making it an abosuadwa.

It was not until the time of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo that certain financial developments, following the Asante Banda war, caused proceedings for creating another stool to be initiated. According to tradition, the Banda campaign was expensive and the war revenue assessed to prominent Ahene was quite a burden, especially for Asokwahene Nana Kwadwo Antoh. His share was set at two hundred and forty pounds.[27] However, the Asokwahene had a wealthy nephew, Boakye Yam, who

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[26]Ibid. Nana Bensua bore three other sons who occupied this stool consecutively but it is not clear whether they were the sons of Ntim Gyakari or of her other husbands at Kumasi.

[27]AIS/AS 73, p. 2.

was the Asantehene's servant at the court and whose influence the Asantehene used to persuade the Asokwa people to pay this debt. Osei Kwadwo died shortly thereafter, and Boakye Yam paid the debt from his own funds. In recognition of this deed and of his outstanding service at the court, the new Asantehene, Osei Kwame, created an Okyeame stool for Nana Boakye Yam.[28] Boakye Yam's uncle, Asokwahene Kwadwo Antoh, was succeeded by Oheneba Kwesi Ampong, the son of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo, during the reign of Asantehene Osei Bonsu.[29]

The occupants of Boakye Yam Panin stool have been closely connected with the Kumasi Oyoko royal family.[30] Okyeame Kofi Nti, recalled in tradition as

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[28] Ibid. Tradition also provided by the present holder of this stool, Kyeame Boakye Tenten. It is not clear why the Asokwahene was unable to pay this debt, especially since the Asokwa people were the Asantehene's traders, either in the northern Savanna markets at Kintampo, Daboya, Bontuku and Salaga or at coastal towns such as Accra, Cape Coast and Elmina. Tradition on trade provided by the present Asokwahene Nana Kofi Poku and Nana Owusu Ansah. See also IAS/AS 1, p. 2. Asante kola nuts sold in these northern markets formed one of the major Sudanese exports across the Sahara. For an excellent analysis of this trade see Adu A. Boahen, Britain, The Sahara, and the Western Sudan, London: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 118.

[29] IAS/AS 1, p. 3.

[30] IAS/AS 73, p. 3. At Mpasatie village one of the stool historians stated that Kofi Nti was the grandson of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo. He could have been the son of one of the nephews or nieces of Asokwahene Oheneba Kwesi Ampong.

a "grandson of the stool"[31] married Afua Kobi, the future Asantehemaa and mother of Kofi Karikari, Mensa Bonsu, Akua Afriiye and Yaa Kyaa. Later on in the nineteenth century, Akyeame Boakye Tenten led the Asante mission to the coast during the "golden axe" scare of 1881. This Okyeame was as the husband of the queen mother.[32] His son and successor, Okyeame Kwaku Fokuo, was one of the members of the Asante Embassy to England late in 1894.[33]

During Asantehene Osei Bonsu's reign, four more Akyeame stools were created. The first was the Akankade stool, currently occupied by Kyeame Nantwi II, which was created for Nana Adu Twum.[34] Nana Twum owes his stool to his oratory and judicial abilities, which were brought to the attention of the Asantehene by his mother the Asantehemaa, Nana Konadu Yiadom. Originally Nana Adu was from Kokofu Adwumase, where he was apparently not an Odehye. When he came to Kumasi he was

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[31]C 4052 (1884) pp. 55-56. Akua Afriiye was the grandmother of the present Asantehemaa Nana Sewaa Nyaako and the great grandmother of the present Asantehene Opoku Ware II. Yaa Kyaa eventually became the Asantehemaa and she was the mother of Prempeh I and the grandmother of the late Prempeh II. Tradition provided by Asantehemaa and Kyeame Boakye Tenten II.

[32]C 4052 (1884), p. 42; C 3064 (1881), pp. 134-135. Boakye Tenten is also spelled Buaki or Buachi Tintin. We shall come to this mission in greater detail later.

[33]C 7918 (1896), p. 60. Confidential Minute Papers, Accession No. 2181.

[34]IAS/AS 75.

assigned to and worked for the queen mother as a farm hand and sometimes drew water for her. Sometimes when he had done enough work and the Asantehemaa had a case,[35] he would invite Adu Twum to listen. According to tradition "every now and then he would give his opinion. Eventually his opinions and ideas impressed every one at the court, including the Queen-Mother herself, and she recommended him to her son, Osei Bonsu, for the post of Okyeame."[36] Adu Twum was not only offered a stool, he was also able to marry one of the Asantehene's granddaughters, Yaa Kyaa, who bore him Kyeame Kankam.[37] This was also the beginning of adehyemmadwa line of succession to this stool. One of the major administrative functions of the occupant of this stool is to be a liaison between the Mamponghene and the Asantehene: "Traditionally the Mamponghene cannot call at the Asantehene's Palace without calling on this linguist to see the Asantehene."[38] He is also a linguist for Gyase Fekuo at the Kumasi Traditional Council meetings.

The second Kyeame position is Ano Panin stool, created for Nana Ano Panin. Unlike Adu Twum of Akankade

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[35]The Asantehemaa, like any Ohene, has her court in which she settles mainly domestic cases.

[36]Tradition given by the present Akankadehene, Kyeame Nantwi II.

[37]Ibid. [38]IAS/AS 75, p. 1.

stool, Nana Ano came from a family that held an important office in Adanse--Kontirehene of Domkwahene Ame Yaw.[39] Asantehene Osei Bonsu spent the first two decades of his reign, inter alia, in drawn-out military conflicts with his southern tributaries. It was during this time that some of the Adanse people moved to the Asin area, while others agreed to continue their allegiance to the Asantehene. Nana Kofi Nyame, Ano Panin's uncle and the Kontirehene, decided to move with his followers from Adanse to Kumasi and ask the Asantehene for a place to settle. The Asantehene gave them an area in Amoamang (about nine miles from Kumasi on Bare Kesie road).[40] At the same time Nana Kofi was attached and required to serve the Asantehene through Anantahene. When he asked what administrative service his family could render the Asantehene, Nana Bonsu responded by asking what talent the family believed it could offer best. Nana Kofi desired an Okyeame position for his nephew Ano. Nana Ano Panin had attended his uncle's court as well as that of Dankwahene in Adanse,

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[39] In almost all of the Akan states the Kontirehene, who is a kind of chief-of-staff, is the second most important person in the state, next to the king. For example, the Bantamahene is the Vice-President of Kumasi Omantuo Council. Tradition provided by the present occupant of Ano Panin stool, Kyeame Penyaa, Isaac Kwadwo Agyeman, M.B.E. and former Senior Secretary of Kumasi and Asanteman Councils. See also IAS/AS 39, IAS/AS 40.

[40] Tradition provided by Kyeame Penyaa.

and this had given him considerable background for the position his family asked for him. Soon, however, Nana Kofi died, and his nephew succeeded him and was appointed an Okyeame.[41]

Nana Ano Panin was the first Okyeame sent to Gyaman to get the golden stool that this monarch had made in imitation of the Asantehene's Sikadwa (Golden Stool). So far, historians have believed that Gyamanhene Adinkra made only one "golden stool."[42] But it would seem that he made two stools, or that there were two attempts to get the one stool. First, according to tradition provided by Okyeame Penyaa,[43] Okyeame Ano Panin did go to Gyaman and tried unsuccessfully to bring back a golden stool. Second, tradition provided by Okyeame Bafuo Osei Akoto reveals that Okyeame Butuakwa went to Gyaman and brought back a golden stool.[44] At first, the writer was puzzled by these two traditions and his attempts to reconcile them were unsuccessful. Traditions gathered by Capt. Fuller in Asante also support the two stool theory: when Osei Bonsu heard that Adinkra ". . . had made himself a

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[41] Ibid.

[42] See for example Reindorf, op. cit., pp. 164-165; Claridge, op. cit., vol. I, p. 300.

[43] In the presence of Dakomprahene, Okyeame Yaw Adubofuo.

[44] Bafuo Osei Akoto is the current occupant of Butuakwa Kyeame stool and one of the Asantehene's senior linguists. See also Reindorf, op. cit., p. 164.

'golden stool,' the king sent for it, and EDINKRA wisely dispatched his new emblem of sovereignty to COOMASSIE, but, thinking to evade detection, he fashioned himself yet another one. By means of spies the King soon learnt of this second affront, and peremptorily claimed the second stool."[45] Both Akyeamehene Appiah Nuamah I and Adontenhene Kwame Frimpong were in a good position to know the Asante traditional history, since they were prominent officials in Asante politics. The Akyeamehene was also connected with the golden stool through his marriage to Ama Sewaa Sentia, the daughter of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu.[46]

Ano Panin's message to Adinkra was simple and straight-forward. Okyeame Penyaa stated this message, transmitted at the Asantehene's request, thus: "My master (or overlord) has sent me to tell you that two

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[45]Fuller, op. cit., p. 54. Capt. Fuller relieved Sir Donald Stewart as the Chief Commissioner of Asante in 1905 and kept the position until 1920. According to W.E.F. Ward, Fuller had more than adequate "time to learn to know the Ashanti and to gain their confidence." (Introduction to Ibid., p. xiv.) Among those Asante people whose confidence he gained and who gave him considerable help in recording his 'traditional history of Ashanti' were Adontenhene Kwamin Frimpon and Akyeamehene Akwesi Inuiama, named in Fuller's introduction to the book, pp. lvii-lviii and his "list of illustrations" at the beginning of the book. The correct names of these two Asante officials are Kwame Frimpong and Akwasi Nuamah, whose other, more commonly used name is Appia Nuamah I. See IAS/AS 95 and IAS/AS 43.

[46]Tradition provided by Okyeame Penyaa and Akyeamehene Appiah Nuamah II.

masters cannot sit on one stool. So, he told me to get your stool and take it to him."[47] Adinkra was apparently well aware of the victories that his overlord had achieved over the coastal tributaries under the able leadership of his generals, Anantahene Apia Dankwa, Bantamahene Amankwa Abinowa and Gyasehene Opoku Frefre.[48] For this reason he readily handed over the stool to Nana Ano Panin. Before he left Gyamanhene's court with the golden stool, Adinkra's wife or sister Soko Abenaa protested handing over the stool so easily and threatened to raise an army to retake it if Okyeame Panin and his followers did not give it back. In addition, she hurled themost extreme insult at Adinkra for his action: "You are not a man because you have given the golden stool to the man. So let us exchange our sexual organs. Give me yours and I will give you mine."[49] She then gathered some militia and attacked

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[47]Okyeame Penyaa.

[48]Reindorf, op. cit., Ch. XII.

[49]Tradition provided by Okyeame Penyaa. In Akan culture whenever men displayed weakness in the presence of women and when there was a viable alternative, their reluctance was challenged by questioning the worth of their manhood. Yaa Asantewa offered the same challenge to Kumasi Omantuo elders when the Governor Sir Frederic Hodgson on March 28, 1900 declared that Prempeh I and Atweneboana would never be returned, that the British Resident would take over Asantehene's authority, that the people had to be taxed to pay the 1874 Anglo-Asante war indemnity, and worst of all, that the Golden Stool was to be surrendered. Ward, History of Ghana, op. cit., p. 308. Further tradition also given by Nana Owusu Ansah, Mampong stool historians and Ejisuhene Nana Diko Pim II and his elders.

Nana Ano Panin and his small retinue. Most of them were killed, the stool was retrieved, and the Okyeame barely managed to evade his pursuers. On his return to Kumasi he told the Asantehene what had happened, and the Asantehene started preparing for war. At the same time he dispatched another embassy, headed by Kwame Butuakwa, to demand the controversial golden stool.[50]

Kwame Butuakwa held the third Okyeame stool that Asantehene Osei Bonsu created. Butuakwa's social origin indicates that he came from the upper ranks of the Asante ruling elite--an important factor in his appointment as an Okyeame. His marriages and other kinship ties (as well as those of his descendants) continued with the members of that group. Kwame Butuakwa's mother, Nana Nyaako Siremukuo, was the daughter of Asantehene Opoku Ware I by Nana Tima Nkanfuo, a royal of the Hemang stool of Kumasi Benkum Fekuo.[51] His father, Kwame Twumasi, was a royal of Kona stool. Butuakwa's only sister, Akua Kwaatimaa, was married to Kwadwo Anane, who was an Okyeame of Adwuma Kasehene, about eleven miles from Kumasi on Mampong road. This marriage is interesting because the only son born to it, Appia, was raised by an Okyeame father who must have given him good

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[50]Reindorf, p. 164. The woman who challenged Adinkra for surrendering his stool to the Asantehene is variously identified as Adinkra's sister, Gyamanhemaa, or his wife. See a slightly different version in Fuller, p. 54.

[51]Tradition given by Okyeame Bafuo Osei Akoto.

training, enabling him, inter alia, to succeed his uncle Butuakwa. Appia's sister, Akua Appiaa, married Jamasihene Nana Borobe.[52] The maternal granddaughter of Akua Appiaa married Kwadwo Anim, a royal of Appaa stool, and from this union were born Kwabena Dwobene and Fafuo Mensa, who eventually occupied Butuakwa stool. One of Bafuo Osei Akoto's maternal second cousins, Nana Afia Agyewaa, married Opanin Kwaku Duah, who was the son of Oheneba Akwasi Gyiamebi.[53] Kyeame Akoto's father, Owusu Sekyere, also a royal of Ankaase stool, was the son of Oheneba Kwabena Burowa, the son of Osei Bonsu.

Before the creation of his stool, Nana Kwame Butuakwa engaged in those activities common to both free men and non-stooled royals--serving the state in some capacity and either farming or trading.[54] The young Butuakwa accompanied his father to Manhyia, where he learned the Afotuosanfuo's job from him. When his father died, Butuakwa knew the job well enough to be appointed his successor. According to tradition,

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[52] Ibid. Tradition also given by Jamasihemaa.

[53] Oheneba Gyiamebi was the son of Asantehene Fredua Agyeman and also the husband of Asantehemaa Yaa Kyaa, the mother of Prempeh I and grandmother of Prempeh II. Ibid. Further tradition given by Asantehemaa. See also 'Precis of Ashanti Expedition,' in ADM 11/1728.

[54] Hutton, op. cit., p. 91. This is probably the same Butuakwa who was Asante resident at Abra during Bowdich's mission. Bowdich, Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, London: Griffith and Farran, 1873, p. 89.

> Butuakwa's father having thus proved himself capable and efficient servant at the king's court in the capacity of sub-treasurer or Assistant Treasurer (Afotosanfuohene) the king thus appointed Butuakwa to this office of Afotosanhene after the death of his father . . .[55]

In his new position Butuakwa's performance was outstanding:

> Butuakwa having been appointed to this post of his father, it is learned proved himself capable in discharging his duties efficiently at the king's court and was at a subsequent date elevated to the status of a linguist . . .[56]

Besides his duties as Afotuosanfuohene, Butuakwa was also Asantehene's Kradwareni (soul washer), a position that did not carry any financial reimbursement but whose status conferred on the holder the right not to be molested by anyone. It was also the duty of Kradwarefuo to protect the Asantehene's rights, to protest whenever they were violated and to report such violators to Kumasi. In one occasion when Nana Butuakwa was on a trading mission to Cape Coast and Anomabo, some soldiers attacked him, in spite of the white clay smeared on his back.[57] Nana Butuakwa protested, "If you touch or molest me, then you are committing an offense against the

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[55] IAS/AS 170, p. 5.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Normally Kradwarefuo, on specified days when they were expected to perform certain rituals to pray for the Asantehene's soul, smeared their bodies with hyire (white clay). Wearing such clay made one's identity and status easy for all to see.

Asante nation."[58] The soldiers paid no heed; they even went so far as to insult the Asantehene--an act which Butuakwa reported to the Asantehene on his return to Kumasi. This was one of the incidents which led to Osei Bonsu's invasion of the coast early in the nineteenth century.[59]

It was after the Asante nation had reestablished her supremacy over her southern tributaries and a British agreement had acknowledged this fact by sending T. Edward Bowdich as an Ambassador to Kumasi that the Asantehene turned his attention to Gyamanhene Adinkra's golden stool. The unsuccessful British support of the Fante against the Asante in 1807, 1811 and 1816 was so disastrous in terms of both human lives and trade that the British were willing to come to terms with the Asantehene. As Ambassador Bowdich wrote in 1817,

> . . . the prolonged blockade of Cape Coast Castle in the last invasion, engendered so much distress and hazard that the Government having averted imminent danger by advancing a large sum of gold on account of the Fantees, earnestly desired the Committee to authorize and enable them to venture an embassy, to deprecate these calamities, to conciliate so powerful a monarch, and to

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[58]Tradition related by Kyeame Osei Akoto.

[59]The main reason for the first Asante campaign in this area was to capture two of his Assin tributary Ahene, Chibu and Aputei, who had defied the Asantehene's effort to settle differences then and another Assin Ohene, Amu. Another reason, later on, was the interruption of trade by plundering of merchants by the Fante. Freeman, op cit., pp. 444-454. H. Meredith, An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, 2nd edition, London: Frank Cass, 1967, pp. 128-140.

propitiate an extension of commerce.[60]

While this embassy was in Kumasi, the Asantehene sent Butuakwa to Gyaman to get the golden stool. On arriving in Bontuku, Adinkra's capital, Butuakwa delivered the Asantehene's message. According to tradition passed down in Butuakwa stool, there were no elders but nhenkwa at the capital when Butuakwa arrived.[61] Adinkra handed over the stool without any resistance and without consulting his elders. But when Soko Abenaa came home and found out what had happened, she asked the drummers to send messages summoning the army to mobilize.[62] A small contingent of Gyaman soldiers was called and ordered to pursue Butuakwa to retrieve the golden stool. They did not succeed, because Butuakwa dodged them until he got to Kumasi. Butuakwa was rewarded for this deed with an Okyeame stool. He was also awarded a title of honor, Bafuo, which means brave man.[63] Soon after this, war broke out between the Asante and Gyaman, partly because pressure was put on Adinkra for giving away the golden stool and partly because Adinkra refused to send a contingent of Gyaman

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[60]Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

[61]Kyeame Bafuo Osei Akoto.

[62]In Asante, and in most of West Africa, drums are used for communication by transmitting coded messages sent by specially trained drummers.

[63]Tradition given by Okyeame Osei Akoto.

troops to fight for Asantehene.[64] Unfortunately, Butuakwa did not enjoy his honors for long--he died in the campaign between the Asantehene and Adinkra. Appia Kyeame succeeded his uncle Butuakwa as the new Okyeame, and it was Appia who took the captive Gyamanhemaa to Bontuku when peace was restored under Asante terms.

The last Okyeame stool created by Osei Bonsu is a minor Ahwehweba rank stool of Jachie linguist, which is also closely related to Jachie stool.[65] There are two stools known as Jachie, the difference being that the first stool dates from before Osei Tutu's time, while the second, the linguist stool, was created for Nana Adusei, a nephew of Jachiehene Nana Yaw Pense. The reason given for creation of this stool was the Asantehene's appreciation of Adusei's "magnificent contribution towards the Fanti war fought at Anomabu in which the king won for himself the traditional title 'Bonsu' after placing the State Sword into the sea to mark his victory over the Fanties."[66] Another possible reason for the creation of this stool is that Nana Yaw Pensa's immediate predecessor as Jachiehene was Oheneba Apaw Panin, the son of Asantehene Kusi Buadum.[67] Okyeame

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[64] Ibid. The Asantehene, like most overlords in West African states, required his tributary states to send him a specified number of soldiers to accompany him or his chosen commander to war.

[65] IAS/AS 126 and IAS/AS 127.

[66] IAS/AS 126, p. 3.

[67] Ibid. Since this Jachie stool is an Abosuadwa

Adusei ended his reign tragically. He was charged, convicted and executed for having accepted a bribe from Denkyerahene Kwadwo Tibo, whom he was entrusted to watch, and for aiding him to escape from Kumasi.[68] Still, even after such a disloyal act, the stool was not removed from his family, for he was succeeded by his relative Nana Bretwum.[69]

During Fredua Agyeman's reign the Asantehene created an Okyeame stool for Kra Boadu. According to tradition "Kra Boadu was one of the king's attendants or servants at his courtyard."[70] Specifically Boadu was the Asantehene's Otumtuni (gun bearer) and Kradwareni (soul washer).[71] He was one of the ambassadors sent by Asantehene Fredua Agyeman to persuade the Juaben people to move back to their homeland following the Kumasi-Jauben war during Asantehene Yaw Akoto's reign. It was in recognition of the negotiative talent which Kra Boadu demonstrated during Kumasi-Juaben conflict that the Otumfuo rewarded him with a linguist stool and a staff appropriately indicating his major

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stool, the mother of Oheneba Apaw was most likely the royal of this stool and it was not unusual, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, for stools to be created for families of the Asantehene's in-laws.

[68] IAS/AS 127, p. 3.

[69] Ibid. [70] IAS/AS 59, p. 1.

[71] Ibid. Further tradition given by the present occupant of this stool, Kyeame Kofi Frimpong.

role: Di atwa or Deatwa, meaning literally the decider or arbitrator of a dispute.[72]

Kra Boadu came from a prominent social background. His father was Nana Bosom Pim, a royal of Nsuta, who had unsuccessfully vied for the succession to that stool. Nana Pim consequently left Nsuta and settled for a while at Adako Gyakye, about eight miles from Kumasi. Eventually he moved to Kumasi and there his young son was taken to the palace and given a job as the Asantehene's gun bearer and soul washer. The Asantehene's soul washers were also spies, a function that Kyeame Butuakwa was probably performing at the coast while he was trading there. According to Ramseyer and Kuhne, who observed the functions of soul washers in Kumasi during their four years' captivity in Kumasi, these soul washers were the spies of the king, and their name literally meant the king's soul, implying that according to custom they were to die when the king died. As spies they were extremely careful in reporting whatever was happening that could affect the king's welfare. While these two foreigners were in Kumasi there were about a thousand soul washers at the capital.[73] When Kra Boadu died he was succeeded by his

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[72] Ibid.

[73] Frederick A. Ramseyer and Silesian J. Kuhne, Four Years in Ashantee, ed. by Mrs. Weitbrecht. London: James Nisbet and Co., 1875, p. 105.

brother Okyeame Yaw Boateng. Originally the occupant of this stool swore the oath of allegiance to Otumfuo with Ahwehweba sword, but following Kyeame Butuakwa's stool abolition in 1961 the Boadu linguists were elevated to Mpomponsuo rank and asked to assume the liaison functions previously performed by Kyeame Akoto.[74]

No other Okyeame stools were created by the Asantehene following the creation of Kra Boadu's stool. Thus we could conclude that by the time of Fredua Agyeman's reign the Asante attempt to establish a hierarchy of diplomats, judges, legislators and administrators was complete.

The Interaction of Akyeame and Mpanyimfuo

So far in this chapter we have dealt with the origins of these officials. We shall now turn our attention to their function in Asante society, their interaction with the elders at court and some of the important missions that they conducted. These missions could have been carried out either by the Akyeame alone, or with the help of selected elders, with the elders assuming a primary or secondary role depending on their

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[74]IAS/AS 59, p. 2; IAS/AS 170, p. 6. Before this time Boadu linguist was the assistant to Kyeame Akoto. Of the twelve Asantehene linguists six are senior and six are junior or assistants. Okyeame Butuakwa's stool was re-established and Okyeame Bafuo Akoto re-enstooled following the overthrow of the late President Kwame Nkrumah's government in 1966.

rank or experience. It is also important at this point to note that these Akyeame and elders were clearly not from the slave classes or lower ranks in Asante society, but from well-to-do families and clans.

As a court officer the Okyeame had heavy responsibilities. Whenever any person was alleged to have violated any of the Asante customs, it was the Okyeame who assessed the case and decided whether it merited being brought to the court's attention.[75] When the Okyeame established that a violation had occurred, he next informed the council of elders having jurisdiction over the custom violated to sit and adjudicate this offense. Such councils varied in size and importance--an offense occurring in a village would be heard by the Odikuro and his council; in an area with an Ohene it would be decided by the Ohene and his Mpanyimfuo; in an Obirempong area by Obirempong or Amantuo Mpanyimfuo, and in all of Asante by the Asantehene and Asanteman. During the hearing the litigants spoke to the council through the Okyeame, and each of the elders present gave his views on the case to the council in a similar fashion.[76] The writer's question as to why

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[75]Tradition provided by Okyeame Butuakwa. Although the Okyeame acted as a one-man grand jury initially, in contrast to the Western legal system, his decision was not final. Any interested or affected party could challenge such a decision and force a hearing of the matter by swearing one of the numerous oaths for this purpose.

[76]In Obirempong courts not all the elders give

everyone giving his views had to do so through the Okyeame had an interesting answer. This was due partly to traditional court etiquette and, more importantly, to the belief that none of the speakers could phrase his ideas as well as the Okyeame for the Ohene. During these court proceedings the Ohene was present, except in unusual circumstances, and as each elder gave his views the Okyeame rephrased these views in a refined court language and told the Ohene what the speaker was saying. In the same way, when the Ohene gave his views about the case the Okyeame rephrased those opinions in proper court language.[77]

Through the court deliberations the Akyeame's assistance settled many differences and potentially explosive conflicts. Our knowledge of the role played by the elders in internal Asante politics is enhanced by an analysis of written records and tradition of the country in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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their views individually and directly, but through the Fekuo spokesman. For example, the Kontire Fekuo would have their views given by Kontirehene. Tradition provided by John Darkwah, Senior Secretary to Kumasi Traditional Council; Sam Kwarteng, Secretary to Mampong Traditional Council, Nana Jamasihene, and Akyeame Butuakwa, Boakye Tenten and Kwadwo Asabre.

[77]This belief has a deeper meaning because it was a taboo for the people to talk directly to the Ohene, who was believed to be divine, or the Ohene to talk directly to the people lest a mistakenly uttered word should have serious repercussions on them. Tradition provided by numerous Akyeame and Ahene in Kumasi and Mampong.

Dupuis' account of the affairs which took place during Opoku Ware I's reign is useful in this regard. During his reign Opoku Ware precipitated a serious constitutional crisis between the monarchy on one hand and the Asante Kotoko on the other. As Dupuis wrote,

> In this stage of politics Sai Apoko, in the latter stage of his reign, enacted new codes of laws, adapted for the government of the various departments of the state; but some of these regulations being considered inimical to the interests of the chiefs, and as they represented it, again, to the public welfare, a dangerous conspiracy was raised against the throne, in the very heart of the kingdom.[78]

This crisis was an inevitable aftermath of extensive Asante expansion, during the reign of Osei Tutu and Opoku Ware, from a small area around Kumasi to Assin and Akyem in the South, Wassa in the West, Gyaman and Ghonja in the North and Kwahu and Akwapim in the East and Southeast. During this expansionary period not only had the monarchical power developed, but so had the power and stature of the original Asante Amantuo, whose subjects had been increased by numerous war captives, either assimilated into Asante society or ruled directly by the Amantuo or indirectly by their representatives.[79] The collective power of Asante Kotoko was still respected early in the eighteenth

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[78]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 235.

[79]Tradition provided by Bantama stool historians, Anantahene, and Tafohene and his elders.

century by Osei Tutu, to avoid internal conflicts that would have weakened the Asante Union and decreased its potential power against its advarsaries. Once these enemies were defeated and their attempt to revolt, following Osei Tutu's death, was successfully crushed, the Asantehene availed himself of this opportunity to consolidate his power internally by decreeing the privileges he enjoyed during the era of conquest: "In fact, this monarch once more gave stability and vigour to the government; . . . he performed as much for his glory as his own predecessor, . . ."[80]

But the Amantuo and other prominent members of the Kotoko were not willing to give their traditional constitutional power to the Asantehene. The resentment of the monarch's power and his new designs to consolidate and enhance it created a resistance in Kumasi so serious that the Asantehene "was obliged to fly at night, and seek refuge at Juabin,"[81] where he convened his followers and attacked his adversaries at Kumasi. The first battle ended with the routing of the constitutionalist forces and the flight of their leaders. The second battle was averted by pressure exerted by their sympathizers who opposed the Asantehene at the capital. The Asantehene agreed to pardon the

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[80]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 233.

[81]Ibid., p. 235.

constitutionalists and "the country, from a state of anarchy, again subsided into tranquility."[82]

The Asante king and elders had thus succeeded in averting the most serious crisis to face their young nation.[83] The credit in this case belongs to those elders who were able to persuade the Asantehene and his adversaries to lay down their weapons and follow the foremost tradition in Asante government, which every official in that nation pledges when taking the oath of office: the king shall listen to the counsel of his elders who in turn will give him the best advice they can. According to Rattray,

> A chief's duties and limitations are strictly defined by a whole series of instructions (which are publicly cited before him on the occasion of his enstoolment), . . . the most important of these instructions is the admonition never to act without the advice and concurrence of his councillors, who include the Queen Mother. Failure to accept such an advice was a legitimate ground for destoolment.[84]

The elders who represented the people told the new Asantehene or Amanhene during oath taking ceremonies

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[82] Ibid.

[83] It was not until 1883 that the nation faced such a crisis again. At that time Asantehene flagrantly violated the constitutional rights of Kotoko members and individuals in the society. See memorandum of Palavers held in Coommassie April 27 and 28, 1883 in C 4477 (1884-85), pp. 41-44. According to Dalzel, Palaver comes "from a Portuguese word palobra; but used for dispute or lawsuit." Archibald Dalzel, The History of Dahomey, 2nd impression, London: Frank Cass, 1967, p. 208 footnote.

[84] Rattray, Ashanti Law and Constitution, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

inter alia, "We do not wish that his ears should be hard of hearing. We do not wish that he should call people fools. We do not wish that he should act on his own initiative."[85] On the other hand, before the Mpanyimfuo took their seats at the King's council, they took an oath promising to give the king the best and most impartial judgment. If any Opanin failed in this duty, the king had legitimate grounds to bring charges against him, and, if the charges were valid, to destool him and replace him with another Opanin. No one in Asante was exempted from this traditional unwritten constitution. Thus Opoku Ware I found himself in trouble when he violated the constitution, because as Rattray later observed:

> The King of Ashanti, moreover, though overlord of each individual Omanhene, was in reality subject to them all when sitting in court, for the constitution allowed a final appeal from his court to a national tribunal, composed of all the great feudatory lords, with their councillors, and the king might himself be arraigned before them.[86]

Opoku Ware I died shortly after the reconciliation of the monarchists and the constitutionalists. The changes that took place thereafter indicate how the Asante Amantuo and other prominent Amanhene felt about

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[85] Ibid. See also pp. 101-104. This information was confirmed to the author by several Ahene in both Kumasi and Mampong.

[86] Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., p. 105. Compare with G. A. Robertson, Notes on Africa, London: Sherwood, 1819, p. 198.

their rights as opposed to the Asantehene's rights. The first step was "a revocation of the obnoxious edicts" originally supported by Opoku Ware I and opposed by these high-ranking members of Asante Kotoko. Consequently the constitutionalists ("principal officers of state, and generals or captains in the army") were guaranteed "a proportionate share of influence in the city, a political preponderance in the councils of the nation, and a princely rank in the provinces."[87] The second step taken by the Asante Kotoko was to deny succession to the candidate for the Golden Stool picked by Opoku Ware before his death. According to Wilks and Priestley,

> . . . on Opoku's death there was a stool dispute, noted by the Danes and the Dutch on the coast, between Kusi and another claimant Dako, whom Opoku had indicated as his successor. Kusi was placed on the throne, and Dako, who refused to recognize the new king, was ultimately put to death.[88]

Since it is the Asante Kotoko which elects the Asantehene from the male members of the royal family upon the recommendation of the Queen Mother, we can confidently conclude that the elders' viewpoint on the new orientation towards monarchical powers prevailed.

It seems, furthermore, that the Queen Mother went along with the final decision to give the stool

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[87]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 235.

[88]Priestley and Wilks, op. cit., p. 93.

to Kusi Buadom. Otherwise, if he was installed against her will, she would undoubtedly have been overthrown as is the custom in such cases. The Queen Mother has a constitutional responsibility to nominate up to three candidates, and if the Kotoko refuses all of them it would then exercise its power to elect the successor from the eligible candidates.[89] Kusi Buadom, as Reindorf put it, "restored to the great chiefs the constitutional powers of which his uncle had deprived them."[90]

There were minor internal problems which had to be settled in Asante during the rule of Kusi Buadom and Osei Kwadwo. Since one of the constitutional provisions decreed by Okomfo Anokye was that no blind person should continue on the stool, the Asante Kotoko asked Kusi to resign when he began to lose his sight late in his reign.[91] The Asante Kotoko Mpanyimfuo, as the guardians of the Asante welfare, have the traditional responsibility of ensuring that everyone follow this political tradition. It was this obligation that forced them to act when they asked Buadom to abdicate, as Reindorf wrote:

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[89]Tradition provided by several elders in Asante. See also IAS/AS 33.

[90]Reindorf, op. cit., p. 130.

[91]Georg Norregard, Danish Settlements in West Africa, 1650-1850 (Boston: Boston University Press, 1966), p. 109.

> When the king's eyes were dimmed by age, the nobles of Asante, tired of his mild reign, determined to put an end to it, built him a palace at Kyeremade, to which he was removed, where he died. . .[92]

Kusi Buadom was succeeded on the throne by Osei Kwadwo, who was comparable in bravery to Osei Tutu and Opoku Ware. If in previous times the Kotoko members had intervened to save the Union, this time it was the Asantehene who intervened between two of the highest ranking union Amanhene--Mampong and Juaben--who were fighting between themselves and endangering Asante government. Of course the Asantehene's action was also supported by the other members who were not party to the conflict. The Asantehene sent an armed contingent to the combat zone to stop the fighting and bring the adversaries to Kumasi.[93] Upon thorough investigation, the Asante Kotoko found Juabenhene Akuamoa at fault and gave back to Mamponghene the land that had been taken. Although the Juabenhene was wrong and was destooled soon after, his successor's incompetence led to his reenstoolment. This demonstrates the Asante people's concern for the welfare of the state and the state need for competent personnel, rather than a

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[92]Reindorf, op. cit., p. 131. Another version from tradition collected by Dupuis at Kumasi indicates that Kusi died from the effects of a wound sustained while fighting against Banna. Tradition supports the blindness hypothesis for Kusi Buadom's abdication from the stool and final death. Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah and Samanghene and his elders.

[93]Reindorf, op. cit., p. 133.

concern for personality conflicts detrimental to the state.

Osei Kwadwo's death ushered in a turbulent interregnum, which was ended only by the enstoolment of Osei Kwame, the son of Mamponghene, whose succession was opposed by some members of Asante Kotoko who preferred the election of another candidate from one of the three branches of Oyoko royal clan. The Mamponghene played a major role in this case and his actions preserved the internal structure of Asante Union. In this capacity the Mamponghene acted not only as one of the principal Amantuo composing the Asante Union, but also as a close relative of the Oyoko lineage currently occupying the Golden Stool. He was both the husband of the Asantehemaa and the father of the new monarch. At the time of his succession Osei Kwame was about twelve years old.[94] Until he reached maturity the government was in the hands of the Queen Mother, a regent and the Asante Kotoko, who collectively decided all matters of national importance.[95]

The major controversy that the Asante Kotoko had to deal with during Osei Kwame's reign was their fear that this monarch might change the religious orientation

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[94] Ibid., p. 133.

[95] See also the Atipin and Adonten stools: IAS/AS 0 and IAS/AS 95.

of the state from traditional beliefs to Islam. Kumasi had long enjoyed the presence of a considerable population of Muslim merchants and scholars, who rendered useful service to the Asante government. Osei Kwame's father, Mamponghene Osafo Kantanka, had a long traditional connection with areas north of Salaga which were tributaries of Asante entrusted to his rule.[96] Mampong traditions clearly indicate these Asante northern "Kramo" or Muslim ties during Osafo Kantanka's reign--it was from the north and the Muslim people that the Asante people got the amulets and charms which they believed to have supernatural protective powers when worn or carried. While Kumasi was willing to exploit her relationship with the north to her own advantage, islamization of her political system was one thing she could not countenance and least of all a Muslim Asantehene. This apprehension contributed to the Asante Kotoko's destoolment of Osei Kwame.[97]

Another apprehension leading to this decision is revealed by Reindorf, who says that the Asantehene was destooled because of a love affair with a Juaben woman which hindered him from performing his royal functions

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[96]Tradition given by Mampong stool historians and Mamponghemaa.

[97]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 244-245. For a detailed study of Moslem activities in Asante see Ivor Wilks. Northern Factor in Ashanti History, Legon, Ghana: Institute of African Studies, 1961, pp. 19-36.

at Kumasi. Thus when Juabenhene Akuamoa Panyin died, and

> the King of Asante went to Dwaben to attend the funeral there, he had connection then with Agyei Badu, sister of Yeboa Kore, whom he ought never to have married, as it was against the constitutional law of Asante. He also neglected his duties in the capital because he had taken fixed residence in Dwaben. This led to Koranten Pete and Apea Dankwa, two powerful Generals in Kumase, combined with other nobles and chiefs, leading an army to Dwaben and deposing the king.[98]

Koranten Pete is Kwarteng Pete, who was the Adontenhene of Kumasi and the regent during Osei Kwame's minority.[99] The Golden Stool was then handed to his brother Opoku Fofie, whose short and uneventful reign ended with his premature death and the succession of yet another brother, Osei Tutu Kwamena or Osei Bonsu, early in the nineteenth century. According to Bowdich Osei Bonsu was enstooled at the age of seventeen.[100]

Thus by the end of the eighteenth century, the Asante Kotoko members had successfully met the most serious challenges to their constitution and national integration. The monarchical attempts to usurp the power of the other members by increasing the Asante hene's power were blunted. The division of power between the two components survived virtually unchanged

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[98]Reindorf, pp. 134-135, Bowdich, op. cit., p. 190 has a slightly different version.

[99]See IAS/AS 95.

[100]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 191.

from the time that Osei Tutu, Okomfo Anokye and the other original Amantuo founders had created it.[101] The Asantehene and the Amantuo had also intervened to solve a conflict between the two important components of Asante: Mampong and Juaben. If this conflict had been allowed to continue beyond control, it could have undermined the Asante Union.

Nevertheless the success of the Asante Kotoko members in resolving internal conflicts within the Amantuo was not matched in the tributary states. The strong kinship bond that united the Amantuo was not prevalent in these areas. Here the control was strong only as long as the tributaries believed that any attempt to revolt and establish their independence would be crushed. Hence, periods of interregnum at Kumasi were periods for starting wars of liberation in distant tributaries.

The most important foreign diplomatic ties with the Asante state before the end of the eighteenth century were with the king of Dahomey and the coastal region.[102] The establishment of Dahomey-Asante ties came in the middle of the eighteenth century, according to Bowdich, during the time of Opoku Ware I.[103]

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[101] Ibid., p. 184.

[102] Dahomey like Asante utilized diplomacy extensively with her neighbors. See Dalzel, op. cit., pp. 8-10, 157, 175, 195-6.

[103] Bowdich, op. cit., p. 185.

According to Dupuis it was during the time of Kusi Buadom, when some of the Asante tributaries in Kwahu, Akim and Buorome were "instigated to take up arms by the intrigues of the court of Dahomey, whose monarch receive them into pay, and promised to support them with an army for the restoration of their original forms of government."[104] But Kusi Buadom personally accompanied his army into Kwahu to suppress the revolt. This was easily accomplished on the first day, and on the second day he decided to cross the Volta to avenge Dahomey's interference. After the first day of severe fighting the Asantehene accepted the advice of his Bosomfuo not to fight but to withdraw. As a result of this action the Dahomey king followed and inflicted severe losses on the Asante army, stranded without boats on the eastern bank of the Volta river. It is not clear when this battle was fought. Akinjogbin dates it in 1764 but does not give any details from Dahomey's side.[105] If this assumption is accurate and if Priestley and Wilks' chronology of Asante kings is accurate, then the battle was fought in the last year

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[104]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 237-238.

[105]See I. A. Akonjogbin, Dahomey and Its Neighbours, London: Cambridge University Press, 1965; p. 84, p. 124, fn. 2; pp. 204-205. The Dahomean army could have pursued the Asante but King Bossa Ahadee was fighting his southern neighbors at the same time. Robert Norris, Memoirs of the Reign of Bossa Ahadee, King of Dahomey, New Impression, London: Frank Cass, 1968, pp. 17-24.

of Kusi's reign, which ended in 1764.[106] It seems unlikely that this battle took place during the first year of Osei Kwadwo's reign.

The outcome of this battle and Osei Kwadwo's victory in suppressing the revolt in his tributaries through military or diplomatic means[107] was so successful that Dahomey, fearing possible Asante attack, decided to establish friendly relations. This they did by sending a "friendly embassy" to Kumasi with "presents from Abomey, announcing the succession of a new sovereign."[108] The strategy worked well for Dahomey, for the battle-weary Osei Kwadwo renewed friendship with his trans-Voltan foe:

> This flattering deputation excited public rejoicings throughout the empire. Costly entertainments were given to the ambassadors; and according to the etiquette of African courts, a splendid embassy was gotten up by Kodjoh. . .[109]

to return the Dahomean gesture.

Kwadwo's death spelled possible disaster for the Dahomean monarch, who did not know whether the new

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[106]Priestley and Wilks, p. 94.

[107]Dupuis writes that on his ascension to the Golden Stool the Asantehene "dispatched messengers to the tributaries who had withheld of certain arrears . . ."; p. 241.

[108]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 243.

[109]Ibid.

monarch would continue the detente. To endure this, when Osei Kwame came to the throne "a congratulatory embassy arrived from Dahomey."[110] For the remaining years of the eighteenth century Asante-Dahomey relations remained friendly and the Asante never mounted a revenge campaign, nor did Dahomey intrigue again with Asantehene's subjects. This was at least a victory for Asante Kotoko and the Asantehene, who developed or encouraged Dahomey's peaceful coexistence policy. It was also a credit to the statesmanship of African leaders. The Sultan of Bogho used his influence to encourage Dahomey to initiate friendly diplomatic ties, fearing that Asante's growing power might be used against Dahomey and result in curtailment of Bogho's trade routes to the coast.[111]

Asante's external ties with the seaboard states were not as important in the eighteenth as in the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century the Asante contact with the Europeans was established privately through traders or through the Asantehene's acquisition of lease deeds (generally called "notes") giving him the right to collect annual rent for forts and

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[110] Ibid., p. 244. In 1764 Dahomey was also fighting Whidah and Badagry State and could not afford another war front in the west. Norris, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

[111] See footnote in Dupuis, op. cit., p. 243.

castles from the Dutch, Danes or British along the coast.[112] The Asante contact continued to the end of the century through fluctuating contacts with the coast. For example, following the war in the Wassa region the Asante contact from Accra to Ahanta was blockaded by an alliance of coastal states, led by Fante, who did not want to allow Asante access to the coast to buy guns and powder.[113] Asante's rule of Akwamu did not last to the end of the century and when it ended the only places where the Asante could trade and buy weapons at the coast was at Accra or Ningo. It was this kind of frustration throughout the eighteenth century that led the Asante to make a concerted effort at the beginning of the nineteenth century to conquer the Fante and other coastal powers so as to end their long-standing interference with Asante trade and direct communication with the coast.[114] This danger was even more

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[112]The conquest of Denkyera gave the Asante the Elmina "note," and after the fall of Akyem in 1742 the "notes" for Danish Christianborg Castle, Dutch Crevecoeur (Ussher) Fort, and Britain's James Fort, all three located in Accra. For a detailed account see J. K. Fynn's Asante and Its Neighbours, 1700-1807, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971, pp. 52-53; Georg Norregard, op. cit., Ch. 13.

[113]Margaret Priestley, 'The Ashanti Question and the British: Eighteenth-Century Origins,' J.A.H. I (1961) especially pp. 37-43. See also her book West African Trade and Coastal Society, London: Oxford University Press, 1969, especially Ch. II.

[114]A similar frustration following the secession of Elmina to the British was the partial cause for Anglo-Asante war in 1873-74. Sir Richard Graves

imminent when Kumasi policymakers thought that Dahomey might extend her power across the lower Volta.[115]

In conclusion, the eighteenth century was the period when most of the Akyeame stools were created. The few that came later, during the reigns of Asantehene Osei Mensa and his two successors were neither crucial nor influential as administrative positions. These stools marked the end of the expansion era for Akyeame positions. In the eighteenth century there was important interaction between the members of Asante Kotoko, including the Asantehene and the high-ranking Obirempong or Amantuohene, over the division of traditional administrative power and authority in Asante. The Asante Kotoko succeeded, though with some difficulty, in resolving this internal power struggle. At the same time peace was established with the neighboring state of Dahomey, after a military confrontation followed by diplomatic exchanges. On the coast as well, the Asante people made their presence felt, as traders

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MacDonnell,'Our Relations with the Ashantees,' in Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute V (1873-74), pp. 75-81.

[115] Ibid., pp. 131-132. In the last decade of the eighteenth century the Asantehene sent "Nkansa and two sons of Osei Kwadwo, the late Asantehene, who were instructed to tell the Danish authorities that the Asantehene was prepared to despatch 10,000 troops immediately . . .," ibid., p. 132. The Asante and the Danes were going to act as allies in their opposition to Dahomey-British expansion to the western banks of the lower Volta. See also Norregard, pp. 156-157.

or government officials on important state business with the African monarchs or with the Europeans. This coastal interaction was on the increase in the nineteenth century, as we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

AKYEAME AND MPANYIMFUO: DIPLOMACY AND NATIONAL INTERESTS

Our objective in this chapter is to analyze the expanding role of the Asante Kotoko members, particularly in dealing with the Europeans in the nineteenth century. The events that led to the Asante invasion of the coastal states and the English forts in the first three decades of that century and the negotiations leading to peace are significant in that they shed light on the motives of the Asante, the major contributors to Asante internal and external policies, the execution of such policies, and the repercussions of these events throughout the century. We have reliable eye-witness accounts which we can use to determine the roles played by the Akyeame, Asantehene and the other Asante Kotoko members, as well as the thinking of these officials, in the series of Anglo-Asante negotiations, among which were those at Anomabo in 1807, and at Kumasi in 1817, and 1820. Recorded interviews with the travelling Asante messengers and ambassadors from 1820 to the end of the century are also very useful in this role analysis.

Asante's "National Interests" Threatened

The Asante relationship with the coastal states and particularly with the Europeans early in the nineteenth century was influenced by her desire to maintain and protect her economic and political interests in this region. The eighteenth century was the period for expanding and consolidating Asante political power over all the area lying between River Volta and River Bia in the West. Most of the trade north of this area reached the coast through Asante merchants. Osei Bonsu was determined to break the Fante and other coastal states' interference with Asante merchants carrying goods between this area and the coast.[1] The Asantehene did not want to fight, but was forced to when other peaceful means, such as diplomatic persuasion, failed. We have already seen that in the last decade of the eighteenth century the Asante outlet to the sea was through Ningo and Accra.

The Asante trade on the coast was clearly affected by the interruptions brought by the Fante.[2]

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[1]As early as 1740 Akim was blockading the trade routes from Accra to Asante. This was one of the causes for Asante-Akim wars in 1742 which brought the Asante dominance right into Accra. Norregard, op. cit., pp. 101-103.

[2]Robertson, op. cit., p. 148.

At Cape Coast Meredith observed that the trade was ". . . formerly a very brisk trade . . . at present, the trade which consists of gold, fluctuates in consequence of the disturbed state of the country."[3] On the coast the Asante's trading allies, the Elminas, decided to join the Asante when the latter attacked the Fante in 1807.[4] The Elminas' decision to join the war on the Asante side was based on economic considerations. Most of them were traders and any interruption in trade affected them adversely. Meredith's observation about the inhabitants of Elmina is telling: "The inhabitants of Elmina consist of traders, fishermen, and persons employed as trade boys and servants: there are some wealthy men among them."[5] Most of the coast was indeed under the African rule and the Europeans, who paid for the land lease and water fees, tried as far as possible to avoid any conflict with the Africans. The Europeans recognized their weakness, and it was partly this lack of effective coastal control that led the Asante to invade the Fante area in 1807.

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[3] H. Meredith, op. cit., p. 95.

[4] Ibid., p. 90.

[5] Ibid., p. 88. The British control on the coast at this time was almost non-existent, and the merchants relied on traditional African governmental institutions to "put a stop to lawless and ungovernable conduct of the people," p. 98.

From the account left by Meredith of coastal politics and the Asante diplomatic efforts to avoid the war, it is clear that the Asante turned to war only after all such efforts had failed.[6] The British also wanted to avoid war because it disrupted trade.[7] The British and Asante generally agreed that it was the Fante and other coastal powers who were to blame for this trade interruption. Thus the Fante blockade of Dutch and English forts in Accra from 1809 to 1810 forced an armed confrontation between these powers and Fante, but since the battle was indecisive the blockade was continued, and the Asantehene raised a considerable army to help the Accra people and European powers to lift it.[8] In 1811 the Asante army was on its march to Accra area.

It was only after the failure of their diplomacy in 1807 that the Asante went to war against the Fante and Assin. When serious differences over grave robbery arose among three tributaries of Asante in Assin, the

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[6]Robertson, op. cit., pp. 148-149. In 1865 a high ranking official of the colonial office assured the Parliamentary Select Committee that the Asante went to war against Britain only as a last resort. C 412 I (1865), p. 8.

[7]Governor Torrane greatly admired Asantehene Osei Bonsu: "In all my negotiations with the King, I had cause to remark, what I have not experienced on the sea-coast, to wit, the strictest regard to his word. In fact, I look to King Zey (so he is called) to be a high character." Hutton, op. cit., p. 218 fn.

[8]Meredith, op. cit., p. 196.

Asantehene called the disputants to Kumasi, listened to the causes of the conflict and then settled the quarrel impartially.[9] But as the Asantehene's decision was rejected by Chebo, the alternative left to Amoo was to force Chebo to comply with the decision.[10] To avert further fighting the Asantehene sent a gift of two "gold manillas" to each of the adversaries "directing them to cease all hostilities." The truce was soon broken and for the second time the Asantehene refrained from taking sides in the conflict as Meredith wrote: "The King of Ashantee, still anxious to reconcile his neighbours and unwilling to draw his sword, presented two gold swords and an axe to Amoo and recommended him to conciliate Quacoe Apoutay, and terminate their quarrels."[11]

But the troublesome Aputei could not be appeased. He attacked Amoo again, taking the golden sword and axe, and forced the Asantehene to a showdown by "killing messengers, and every man who fell into his hands, not

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[9] Ibid., pp. 131-132. Assin was divided into two parts, one ruled by King Chebo and Kwaku Aputei and the other by Amoo. A subject of Chebo robbed the grave of a wealthy citizen of Amoo's and when requested to pay for this damage he refused. The Asantehene was asked to decide the case, so as to avert war.

[10] A. B. Ellis, History of the Gold Coast of West Africa, 2nd ed., New York: Negro University Press, 1969, Ch. X.

[11] Ibid., p. 133.

sparing even the king of Ashantee's messengers!"[12] Clearly there was nothing left for the Asantehene and Asante Kotoko to do but to intervene militarily to restore order.[13] Three genuine attempts at diplomatic settlement had failed to bring Chebo and Aputei to their senses. According to tradition, whenever any messenger was bodily abused, for example, if a part of his body such as a finger was cut off, this was taken as an immediate declaration of war.[14]

As the Asante forces approached, Chebo and Aputei fled to Fante country. Even here the Asantehene's disposition towards diplomacy was remarkable. Before invading this region he sent a diplomatic mission to Asekumahene, Asante tributary, with a gift of twenty

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[12] Ibid. Similar tradition is still told in Kumasi.

[13] The Asantehene was wise to consult the Kotoko on major decisions. Once after such a consultation about sending an embassy to Elmina he told Huydecoper, "If I do not tell them they will say that I do not trust them; I am their master but it is unwise to let them become dissatisfied." Huydecoper, op. cit., p. 22. The Asantehene had also to consult the Kotoko before the three European captives could be allowed into Kumasi. Jules Gros, Voyages, Adventures et Captivité de J. Bonnat Chez des Achantis, Paris: E. Plan, Nourrit, 1884, p. 176. The Kotoko also vetoed the Ashantehene Osei Bonsu's desire to have his children educated on the coast by the British. William Hutchinson's letter in T. E. Bowdich, A Reply to the Quarterly Review, 1820, pp. 26-27. Hereafter this source will be referred to as Bowdich, A Reply . . . .

[14] Tradition provided by Nana Owusu Ansah and Bantama Stool Historians.

ounces of gold requesting permission to pursue his two foes in that country. Furthermore the ambassador sought to reassure Asekumahene that he would not interfere with Fante politics, that his sole motive was to get Chebo and Aputei. But this permission was refused. The Fante even decided to give military support to the Asantehene's foes. Again Asante diplomacy failed to achieve peaceful ends.

It was after this that the Asantehene sent an army to Fante under Anantahene Appia Dankwa.[15] Once the Asante had inflicted a decisive defeat on their adversaries, they agreed to a peace settlement; but when the Asantehene sent his ambassadors with gifts to Chebo and Aputei to negotiate for the end to the war, Chebo and Aputei refused the gifts and executed the envoys. This was indeed extremely serious--as Meredith accurately observed, "this wicked and unprovoked act, roused the indignation of the King of Ashantee, and he vowed eternal war against the aggressor."[16] The war that ensued completely disrupted the trade, causing the British officers at Cape Coast castle to desire peace with the Asante.[17] But it was not until the Fante were

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[15]Tradition given by Amantahene Appia Dankwa II.

[16]Meredith, op. cit., p. 135. This was early in March/April 1806.

[17]Besides trade disruption, wars brought pressure for negotiations due to severe famines on coastal societies. Hutton, op. cit., pp. 100, 124 see footnote. H. W. Daendels, op. cit., pp. 53, 71, 113.

completely defeated at Anomabo that the Asante and the British entered into peace. During all this time the Asante desire for peace was still noticeable to the Europeans.[18] As Meredith wrote after the Anomabo campaign, "there was not, however, any desire manifested by the Ashantee to renew hostilities and every motion indicated a wish for peace."[19]

When the peace envoys were exchanged, carrying flags of truce, the Asantehene's envoys pointed to Chebo and Aputei as the causes of the war. The king's desire for peace was also shown by his reception of the European truce flag bearers, to whom he gave a "fat sheep." For the sake of peace and continued trade between the English and Asante, Gov. Torrane gave up Chebo after lengthy discussions. The Anglo-Asante negotiations which ended this war also reveal the Asante desire for peace.[20] The Asantehene's attitude was not due to

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[18]Mr. James Swanzy, a long time resident and trader on this coast, testified to the Parliamentary Committee that the Asante "were the most civil and well bred people that I have ever seen in Africa." C. 506 (1816), pp. 32, 59.

[19]Meredith, op. cit., p. 146.

[20]C. 506 (1816), pp. 58-59. The Asantehene earnestly desired the trade routes open. For this reason "he solicited an officer of the African Company, to be sent up to his country and reside there in the character of ambassador, guaranteeing his safety." Ibid., p. 59. See also Minutes of Evidence: Committee on African Settlements and Forts, C. 431 (1817), pp. 36-37. When General Daendels appealed to the Asantehene to order Anantahene Appia Dankwa from blockading or interrupting trade with Kommenda, the Asantehene responded favourably and immediately. The Asantehene's urgent

military considerations, for his recent battlefield performance had given him "a high opinion of his power and the bravery of his army."[21] As soon as the besieged Anomabo contingent raised the white flag of truce, the Asantehene dispatched his envoys bearing the highest official ambassadorial emblems: the golden swords and axes.

In the conduct of Asante diplomacy the elders played an important role. When a truce was reached between the Asante and Anomabo, and Mr. Datton visited the Asante camp, the next delegation sent to negotiate with Col. Torrane, the Governor of Cape Coast, consisted of twelve elders. The king was represented by six of his senior elders and the senior Ahene of Asante deputed six members.[22] It was essential that any attempt to settle this dispute be collective, because the Otumfuo was aware of the pressure being exerted by the other members of Asante Kotoko, whom Meredith refers to as his auxiliaries. Once Governor Torrane came face to face with the Asantehene, the latter and his council obliged the Governor to follow Asante diplomatic

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orders were relayed to Appia by two sword bearers. Daendels, op. cit., pp. 118-120.

[21] Meredith, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

[22] Ibid., p. 152. In 1815 following Asante's defeat of Akim and Akwapim the Asante sent "an embassy of their greatest nobles" for negotiations with the Danes at Christiansborg. Norregard, op. cit., p. 192.

protocol. He visited each Asanteman member sitting in the traditional semi-circle formation, with retinue, before visiting the Asantehene. This was an important part of negotiation formality, designed to display the power, glamour, wealth and status of the high ranking members of Asante. According to the observers of this display, this was "a ceremony that could not be prudently denied, . . . those men had their courts, and collectively had formed an extensive circle. Every one of them was seated under a huge umbrella, surrounded by attendants and guards, with young people employed to fan the air, and dispersing flies which were numerous and troublesome."[23] When the Governor came to the King he noticed that his attendants' "appearance bore evidence of signs of riches and authority: chains, stools, axes, swords, flutes, messenger-canes, etc. were either of solid gold, or richly adorned with that metal: those dazzling appearances, added to damask, taffety, and their rich dresses gave a splendour to the scene highly interesting."[24] There were also musicians who at the appropriate moment played for the king their instruments

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[23]Meredith, op. cit., p. 157. One of these prominent men of Kumasi was a Muslim who was sitting in the circle surrounded by his retinue and soldiers armed with muskets, bows and arrows. He was from Katsina and in the service of the Asantehene. See also C. 506 (1854-55), p. 59.

[24]Ibid., p. 158.

such as drums, flutes and horns.[25] After several negotiation sessions Asantehene Osei Bonsu and his army left to do battle with his adversaries, who were advancing. Before he left, however, he expressed what had been uppermost in his mind since the beginning of the war: the fact that after subduing his foes he "would return to Annamaboe for the purpose of making arrangements relative to the future welfare of the country and the regulation of trade."[26]

This face-to-face negotiation between the Asante and the British resolved the major differences between the two nations. First, the Asantehene agreed that the Africans residing in the British forts would remain neutral; second, that the British flag was to be respected; third, that the refugees in the fort were to be released with an understanding that they were the Asantehene's subjects by right of his having conquered this area; fourth, Chebo, the cause of the war, with his entire regalia was delivered to the Asantehene.[27] For the first time the Asante power was no longer a legend on the Cape coast region but a reality. Although the peace settlement did not necessarily assure

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[25]The Asantehene was an affable black, medium-sized person, well built, with a friendly disposition, and who remarkably "exceeded the expectations of every person." Ibid., p. 160.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., pp. 160-163.

the Asante merchants peaceful passage to the coast, it was clear that the British looked upon the Asante as the only power that could check Fante disruption of trade. In fact, in 1810 when the Fante threatened Elmina and Accra, the Governor sent a message to Kumasi and Osei Bonsu responded by raising two armies to quell the Fante rebellion, as he realized how important it was to keep Asante trade flowing to and from these ports.[28] The British saw the role of Asante as that of policemen in keeping the trade routes to the interior open:

> If the Fantees were not kept in some awe by the Ashantees they would be as troublesome perhaps to the British interest as they have been to the Dutch: for although we well know, they would not come to open hostilities, or, rather, they would not attempt an open rupture, by attacking any of our forts; yet they could cause great annoyance, by stopping communication, and supporting a strict blockade.[29]

There was no doubt that the trade on the coast and its increase depended on unhampered communication with the interior powers.[30] There was thus a mutual desire on the part of the Europeans and Asante to keep the trade routes free. This is why it was felt on the coast

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[28] Ibid., p. 166. After a prolonged campaign led by Gyasehene Opoku Frefre against Akwapimhene Kwau, Akimhene Atta and the towns of Addah and Krobo finally returned to Kumasi. The other division of the army sent to relieve Elmina did so, successfully defeating the Fante and reaching the coast early in 1811.

[29] Ibid., p. 205.

[30] C. 431 (1817), pp. 18-25.

as early as 1811 that Europeans should establish alliances with the interior powers like Asante, who could accept residents or agents for increasing exports and imports into those nations.[31]

Another case which reveals the Asante desire to use diplomacy in lieu of war to maintain and protect their economic interests is the Anglo-Asante treaty negotiations during Bowdich's mission to Kumasi in 1817.

The Conduct of Diplomacy in Asante

The conduct of Asante diplomacy can be understood by an analysis of some Anglo-Asante negotiations that took place in Kumasi, especially after the Asante invasion of the coast in 1816. Bowdich's mission to Asante in 1817 was undertaken to prevent a "prolonged blockade of Cape Coast," which that nation had begun, to minimize the need for the British government's financial support of weak Fante states, to open an embassy in Asante, and ". . . to conciliate so powerful a monarch, and to propitiate extension of commerce."[32] When the embassy arrived in Kumasi, they found that the Asante were also eager for peace and for the improvement of commerce, because in 1814 the Asantehene had

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[31]Meredith, op. cit., pp. 207-208, C. 506, op. cit., p. 59

[32]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 3. Nearly £4,000 was allocated for the expenses of this mission. Hutton, op. cit., p. 119. Cape Coast was "considered the emporium of trade" in Gold Coast. C. 506, p. 17.

sent Bantamahene Amakwatia and Anantahene Appia Dankwa against the rebellious Akims and Akwapims, in order to "throw open the path, to renew his communication with Accra, and to draw from thence the arrears of pay which had remained unpaid since the last invasion."[33] The Asantehene had also, through these generals and their successors, conquered all the rebels, captured Akimhene Kwadwo Kumaa, killed Akwapimhene Kwaku Safakye and made Adu Dankwa (brother of Safakye) Akwapimhene, accepted 100 ounces of gold and an oath of allegiance from the Cape Coast Fantes, and had left Asante residents in all these areas with the responsibility "to maintain the Fantee subjection and to collect the king's tribute."[34] These were the main events that precipitated the Bowdich mission.

The welcoming of an important European mission at Kumasi was taken very seriously by the Asante. Every precaution was taken to impress the foreigners with the military power, wealth and meticulous protocol befitting the most influential interior state in the Gold Coast.[35]

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[33]Brodie Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 101. Information also provided by Anantahene Appia Dankwa II.

[34]Ibid., pp. 101-106.

[35]See also the 'Journal of Lt. Gov. Winniett's visit to the King of Ashantee' in C. 399 (1849), pp. 4-5. Winniett was also impressed by the furnishing and service at the Asantehene's country residence at Breman where he was invited for dinner on October 24, 1848. As he wrote: "Many of the rooms around the squares were occupied with neat bedsteads of European manufacture,

For example, Bowdich and his party entered the capital under a sacrificial sheep "wrapped in red silk, and suspended between two lofty poles" to ensure that they did not bring any misfortune. The effect of this initial impression was well-calculated--Bowdich writes: ". . . upwards of 5,000 people, the greater part warriors, met us with awful bursts of martial music, discordant only in its mixture; for horns, drums, rattles, and gong-gongs were all exerted with a zeal bordering on frenzy, to subdue us by the first impression."[36] Muskets were fired; warriors performed martial dances, smoke from blunderbusses covered the sky; major captains appeared in war-caps, leopard-skins, plumes of eagles' feathers, and gilded rams' heads; other soldiers brandished their traditional weapons--knives, poisoned arrows, bows, spears.[37] Dupuis' welcome to Kumasi three years later was equally magnificent.

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dressed with silk hangings, and decorated with mirrors, pictures, time-pieces, fancy boxes, chandeliers and many other articles of European manufacture," and ". . . the dinner was placed on the table, in a manner quite consistent with English table, and it was really very nicely served up; it consisted of soup, a sheep roasted whole, a sheep dressed in joints, a turkey, fowls, a variety of vegetables, plum-pudding, oranges, groundnuts, ale, wine and liqueurs," pp. 8-9.

[36]Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

[37]Hutton, op. cit., pp. 208-213; see Daendels, op. cit., p. 117 for welcoming of W. Huydecoper, the Dutch envoy when he arrived in Kumasi on May 22, 1816.

All ranks of Asante society were represented--from high-ranking chiefs distinguished by their huge umbrellas, dressed in their best kente and adinkra cloth to commoners and slaves who were spectators or servants.[38] When Freeman visited Kumasi twice, in 1839 and 1841, the court etiquette had not changed.[39] The officials were dressed in their best clothes and jewels. Freeman observed that "the wrists of some of the chiefs were so heavily laden with golden ornaments that they rested their arms on the shoulders of some of their attendants."[40] These officials were the major Amantuo and Tributary heads who had come to Kumasi for the occasion. As the foreigners approached they saw these rulers seated in a large semi-circle with the Asantehene occupying the most conspicuous position.[41] Closely seated by these Ahene or guiding the visitors were the

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[38]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 70-72; John Carr and John Buckman the two Mulatto envoys sent to Kumasi early in 1828 were equally amazed by the accorded welcome accorded to them by the Asante. Major Ricketts, Narrative of the Ashante War, London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1831, pp. 148-150.

[39]See Freeman, op. cit., pp. 46-48, pp. 123-126.

[40]Ibid., p. 48. Bowdich also observed that Asante kings wore "massive gold ornaments, which glistened in every direction." (op. cit., p. 36.) Dupuis likewise reported Ahene with "massive gold plates, chains of some metal, and solid lumps of rock-gold, of the weight, perhaps, of a pound or more each." (Dupuis, op. cit., p. 74.)

[41]Freeman, op. cit., pp. 46-47. This state seating is noticeable in Kumasi even today during important customs and festivals such as the recent funeral ceremonies of Prempeh II.

Akyeame and sword-bearers with gilded staffs or swords.[42]

The significant events of Asante history were likewise conveyed to the visitors. This was done partly by oral historians who accompanied every important Ohene and sang or repeated the names and deeds of all the heroes of that stool.[43] One such song that was sung when Dupuis was at Kumasi is illustrative:

> Where shall we find such a warrior as the strong and beautiful Apacoo, whose eyes are like the panther fight? O great slave of the king, how you are beloved! Your victories delight his ears. Who fought the Gamans and killed their caboceer Adouai? Apacoo Kudjo! Where are the women and the gold? Apacoo Kudjo has them. He is a rich man, a mighty man! His enemies die when he is angry. He is invulnerable, his fetische (amulet) no man can look upon and live.[44]

The skulls of important adversaries, conquered by Asante were pointed out on the fontomfrom drums on which they hung. The message conveyed in this display was that if disputes were not settled amicably, the Asante would use the power whose presence was so dramatically revealed. So that there should be no doubt what the Asante would do in that case, the executioners with their swords were an important group in this welcoming gathering. According to Dupuis some of them approached him "flourishing their scimiters over my head with menacing

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[42] Ibid., Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 37-38; Dupuis, op. cit., p. 71.

[43] Ibid., p. 43.

[44] Ibid., p. 39, 44.

violence. This threatening ceremony was directed with renovated vigour as I advanced to take the king's hand. . . ."[45] Sometimes Ahene armed with spears or other weapons danced menacingly in front of the Europeans to convey the same impression.[46] Even the tributary leaders were well aware of the implications of this reception, as the Bannahene let Dupuis know at the conclusion of a menacing dance and brandishing a sword:

> This white caboceer comes up to talk palaver. If he comes with truth in heart, and with friendly intentions, it is well, but if he tries to deceive and dishonour the king, it cannot be suffered; and I shall kill all these people [Fantes] . . . they are the king's slaves.[47]

However, the Asante people were also warm in their reception of aliens and left no doubt as to their hospitality. As the foreigners approached the capital, welcoming linguists, sword-bearers and guides were sent

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[45]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 73. Even today in important ceremonies in Kumasi the executioners are still noticeable, preceding the Asantehene in procession, brandishing their execution knives.

[46]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 44; Hutton, op. cit., p. 222; Ricketts, op. cit., pp. 148-149; When Lt. Gov. Winniett visited Kumasi in 1848 the Asantehene had 850 people carry to this visitor called by the host "a token of the King's goodwill" consisting of: "2 bullocks, 4 sheep, 4 turkeys, 6 ducks, 20 guinea-fowls, 6 pigs, 20 fowls, 20 pigeons, 400 yams, 303 bunches of plantain, 4 dishes native rice, 6 calabashes of honey, oranges, eggs, palm nuts, sundry vegetables, 40 logs of wood, and 10 baskets of corn." C. 399 (1849), p. 7.

[47]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 80.

to meet them. As soon as they got to Kumasi, they were offered the traditional Asante drink of palm-wine, given livestock, vegetables, grain and gold dust to live on comfortably while at the capital.[48] When Freeman was at Kumasi in 1841 he writes that the Asantehene weekly provided them with a "bountiful supply of palm wine." Once Nana Opoku [probably the Gyasehene] gave Freeman's party "a beautiful cow and calf, several sheep (some of them very large), pigs, eggs, plantains, yams, and other vegetables, and fifteen ounces, twelve ackies, of gold dust (equal to £63 currency or £56 sterling)."[49] Besides, the residence provided at Kumasi was the best that could be found. Dupuis, for example, stayed at Prince Owusu Adum's palace.[50]

Not every important ruler of Asante was present at Kumasi during Bowdich and Dupuis' negotiations. The Mamponghene, Bekwaihene, Adansehene, Kokofuhene, and Nsutahene were not there, nor were they mentioned by

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[48]Hutton, op. cit., p. 222, Ricketts, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

[49]Freeman, op. cit., pp. 129 and 54. For Dupuis see op. cit., p. 83, and for similar gifts for Bowdich see his op. cit., pp. 62-63, 83.

[50]Op. cit., p. 83. This is the well-known Asante ambassador, the nephew of Asantehene, who had been sent to the coast for the Kommenda affair, and who was finally given orders to blockade the coast when the Dupuis treaty was not ratified in 1820. Major Ricketts, op. cit., p. 7. See also William Hutton, op. cit., pp. 128-131.

either Bowdich or Dupuis.[51] In fact, only the Juabenhene Boateng Kwame ratified the 1817 Anglo-Asante treaty as an equal partner of Asantehene.[52] Kumasi was represented by, among others, the Bantamahene Amakwatia, Akwamuhene Kwasi Kofi,[53] Buabasahene, (Gyasehene) Opoku Frefre, and Adumhene Odumata.[54] It seems that the two treaties were mainly debated by the Asantehene and the rulers of Kumasi Traditional Council. Only in the two days before it was ratified did the entire national assembly, comprised of both Amantuo and tributary heads, discuss this treaty. Amantuo patrons (who served as liaison personnel with Amantuo or tributary rulers) were present, and it is reasonable to conclude that they represented these rulers in the preliminary treaty debates. These patrons kept the rulers outside of Kumasi well informed of the progress being made, so that when they arrived in Kumasi the debate was not unnecessarily

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[51]Bowdich was pushing for ratification of the treaty "six days" before the national annual yam festival, when all the Amantuo tributary heads came to Kumasi. (Op. cit., p. 135.)

[52]Ibid., pp. 118, 140-141.

[53]This is the Akwamuhene who is also remembered in tradition as Kwakye Kofi, the son of one of the best Asante fighters, Akwamuhene Akwawuah. IAS/AS 38, pp. 4-5.

[54]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 118. The Adumhene was related to the Golden Stool by marriage because the Asante coastal ambassador Prince Owusu Adum was the nephew of Asantehene Osei Bonsu, which means that one of the Asantehene married one of the royal daughters of the Adum stool.

drawn out.[55]

When the negotiations commenced, they were conducted on the Asante side by the members mentioned above, as well as by other important office-holders in Kumasi. In Bowdich's time those present at the negotiations were "superior captains" who were expensive and colorful Asante kente cloth woven from thread unravelled from foreign silk imported into Asante,[56] Muslims of rank dressed in the rich North African style, the Sanahene, and some tributary state heads such as the successor of Chebo.[57] On February 29, 1820, when Dupuis was called to commence negotiations, the Asantehene was present with his ministers and captains surrounding him.[58] Also present and indispensable were the linguists who were used to send gifts or messages to the English party, or as consultants.

There were four Asante linguists at Kumasi during the discussion on the 1817 Anglo-Asante treaty. These linguists were the confidants of the Asantehene and the entire Asante Kotoko. Their wit, rhetoric and oratory ability, knowledge of court etiquette and language, and their vast knowledge of the tradition and history were

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[55]See Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., Ch. XII.

[56]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 38.

[57]Ibid., p. 44.

[58]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 86-87; for Freeman see op. cit., p. 46, 124.

all very useful during these negotiations. According to Casely-Hayford, a linguist was "generally the repository, or, if you like, a walking encyclopedia, of all traditional knowledge and information. . . ."[59] The four Asante linguists present were Adusei,[60] described as chief linguist, who was very active in both the 1817 and 1820 Anglo-Asante negotiation; Otee, Kankam and Yokokroko.[61] Besides the linguists and the Kumasi elders there were also heads of some of the tributary states, especially during Dupuis' time when Dompoasehene Satin, Amoafohene Kofi Adukon, and Asamoa Kwadwo from the Assin and Fante regions participated in discussion and ratification of the treaty.[62]

Once all these officials were assembled at Kumasi, the public discussion of the major issues of concern in Anglo-Asante began in earnest. While the most pronounced reason for conflict was clearly economic--

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[59]J. E. Casely-Hayford, Gold Coast Native Institutions, London: Frank Cass, 1970, p. 694. Bowdich describes Juabenhene's two chief linguists Kwame Safo and Kobara Safo as Juabenhene's "principal counsellors," op. cit., p. 141.

[60]The name is spelled differently: Bowdich spells it Adoocei, op. cit., p. 122 whereas Dupuis spelled it Adusai, op. cit., p. 103. This is probably the same name as Adu Osei which is easily abbreviated in speech as Adusei.

[61]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 155; see also Dupuis, op. cit., p. 127.

[62]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 166.

disruption of trade--Asante had other reasons for going to war. For example, intolerable insults[63] were sent to the Asantehene: "When I fought Gaman, I did not make war for slaves but because Dinkira (the king) sent me an arrogant message and killed my people, and refused to pay me gold as his father did."[64] It was this type of abuse of Asante ambassadors by Kommenda and Fante people, which occurred several times, and the British inability to intervene as Bowdich had promised, that finally forced the Asantehene to fine the Cape Coast people 1600 ounces of gold and demand the same from the British at Cape Coast Castle.[65]

The Asantehene and the high ranking members of Kotoko were ready to go to war in other instances when their honor was threatened. Several of these members swore to take arms against the British and Fante when Mr. James of the Bowdich mission revealed that the notes held by the Fante would not be delivered to Asantehene as the Asante ambassadors had been promised at the coast before the end of the war. The statement that the Asante would receive only four ounces annual

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[63]One of the reasons cited for the 1807 Asante-Fante war was a Fante soldier who was killed at Cape Coast for having insulted the Asantehene publicly. C. 412 I (1865), p. 234; C. 551 (1842), p. 39.

[64]Ibid., p. 164.

[65]Hutton, op. cit., pp. 122-131.

rent, instead of the full amount enraged many Asante Kotoko members, and had it not been for Bowdich, who pacified the irate council when Mr. James stopped speaking, the consequences would have been disastrous.[66] The Asantehene also rejected the rumors spread on the coast about his nation and about other "kings" in the Asante region. Thus when Dupuis expressed interest in visiting the "king" of Juaben, the Asantehene's retort was: "Who is he? Am not I the king? Is there any other king besides me? Does the book say so too? If so, it spreads a shameful lie in the white country. . . . Ask all my captains, ask all the Fantees, if they know any other king besides me. Shame! Great shame!"[67]

Yet another reason for going to war was to enforce payment of tribute due the Asantehene from all the conquered states. Those states like Fante that refused to pay tribute, as they had done since they were conquered in 1807, were considered to be a defiance of Asante authority and subject to punitive measures. In the treaty debates the Otumfuo reiterated

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[66]Although Bowdich's account of this incident is rather exaggerated and not entirely in agreement with that of Mr. James, both agree on the sense of betrayal of trust expressed by the Asante assembly on this occasion. See W. E. F. Ward's introduction to Bowdich, op. cit., 3rd edition. Bowdich's anti-James sentiment is apparent in Bowdich, A Reply . . ., op. cit., especially pp. 31-32; and in T. E. Bowdich, The African Committee, London: Longman, 1819, pp. 11-13.

[67]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 138-139. This was also meant to refute the contention that Juabenhene's ratification of the 1817 treaty made him the Asantehene's equal.

firmly that "Fantee, with all its town, was inseparably united to the empire, from the date of its conquest; and that he had always received tribute . . . and that his just title should never be wrestled from him unless by force of arms."[68] There were many other occasions when the Asante army was sent to dissident tributaries to enforce their allegiance and continued payment of tribute, especially whenever any defiance occurred after installation of the new monarch. The Asantehene believed that such states should not be allowed to break their sacred oath of allegiance, just as the European states did not easily allow the breaking of treaties.

Thus the Asante people stood ready to uphold the challenge to their sovereignty over conquered areas at any cost. They desired, like any modern state, to protect their prestige, power politics, and commercial interests[69] through diplomacy or through force of arms if necessary. This approach is clear in 1817. It is also clear in the 1820 negotiations that the Asante expected the British to honor the 1817 treaty, to fulfill their role of intervening in good faith to find peaceful solutions to disputes between Asante and her coastal dependencies. The Asante were willing to pursue

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[68] Ibid., p. 139.

[69] Robertson, op. cit., p. 137.

all avenues of peace before taking up arms.[70] But when British interests forced them to support their allies, the Fante, in violation of an international treaty, the Asante saw the British strategy and were quick to point this out to Dupuis when he came to Kumasi.

The thing that annoyed the Asante most was what appeared to be the British unwillingness to honor her treaty commitment. We can understand this situation better if we look at the ntam (oath), an important instrument for sealing treaties, which the Asante took very seriously. The Asante concluded any agreement by taking an oath which differed according to the significance of the issue and the rank of the oath-takers.[71] The highest oath of Asante was ntam kesie. This oath refers to the battle of Kromatin, in which Osei Tutu was killed, and Memeneda, the day it was fought in Akim. When the Asantehene undertook to ratify the 1817 treaty, he clearly enunciated his words; he was followed by his major Abirempong, who did the same. The Europeans were also requested to take a similar oath, but they refused on the grounds that it violated their own custom. Instead the English party used a prayer book, the Bible or

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[70] C. 431 (1817), pp. 36-37; Daendels, op. cit., pp. 118-120; Dupuis, op. cit., p. 226.

[71] Tradition provided by Bantama and Mampong stool historians.

the Koran.[72]

Once the Asante had concluded satisfactory treaties with the British they believed that the British would honor the terms of these treaties, and when this did not happen they felt betrayed.[73] While the Asantehene and his elders were responsible for interpreting and maintaining the treaty, without having to answer to a higher authority, the British ambassadors at Kumasi and the Europeans on the coast had to consult the coastal states and their home governments in Britain, Denmark, or the Netherlands. And the Asante people did not know how much independent power to make treaties the British ambassadors actually had. The events between 1817 and 1819 were disappointing for the Asante because the British on the coast ignored enforcing clauses in the Anglo-Asante treaty of 1817: for example, Clause Four, stipulating that the Asante will seek redress from the Governor-in-Chief "in case of aggression on the part of natives under the British protection"; and Clause Seven, stipulating that the British fort administrators would "at all times afford every protection in their power to the persons and property of the people of Ashantee and Dwabin who may

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[72]Bowdich once refused when the Muslims insisted that he use the Koran, but when he offered to lay his hand on it three times instead, this was accepted as sufficient. See Ward in Bowdich, op. cit., 3rd edition, p. 32.

[73]Dupuis, op. cit., Ch. IV.

resort to the waterside."[74] The Asante frustration can be understood better if we consider the intense negotiations between the two parties,[75] the strenuous time pressure,[76] Bowdich's refusal of the Asantehene's request that either party breaking the treaty be fined, and Bowdich's emphatic assurance that "no infraction of the treaty could take place."[77] When the treaty was not observed on the coast, the Asante people recalled the day it had been ratified. On that day the Asantehene had invoked the wrath of Onyame and Bosomfuo if he swore a false oath, or if "he did not revenge the Ashantee to the full" if the British did not adhere to the terms of the treaty.[78]

By the time Dupuis got to Kumasi the Asante strongly regretted having signed the treaty. The Asantehene demonstrated this frustration clearly one day when he suddenly broke off his conversion over the

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[74]See copy of the treaty in Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

[75]See for example the letter dictated by the Asantehene to Bowdich for Governor John Hope Smith in ibid., pp. 77-81.

[76]The treaty was discussed in public and in private for many days in Kumasi and once the Asante Kotoko suspended all other state business to debate about it for two consecutive days. Ibid., p. 118.

[77]Ibid., p. 120.

[78]Ibid., p. 141. The other important Ahene present on that day, September 7, 1817, also swore on oath to abide by the treaty.

provisions of the treaty and hurled a copy of it to the ground asking in disgust "What is the use of that book [treaty]. I sent it back to the governor and now he returns it to me."[79] The Asantehene could not see why the British refused to intervent in the Kommenda affair, especially after his messengers had been insulted and beaten; nor why they refused to receive his ambassadors and encouraged the Fante rebellion.[80] To the Asantehene it seemed that this could only lead to an undesirable war and the loss of valuable lives. But he was not sure what the Governor thought: "Does he want war, to kill poor women and children and old people?"[81] The Asantehene definitely did not want war, but peace and commerce, as we see from his favorable reaction to an article in Dupuis' proposed treaty dealing with trade: "This is what I want. I don't want war, that is only the talk of bad men."[82] But while the Asante people wanted to maintain peace to avoid economic dislocation, they were also willing to go to war if any of the Asantahene's tributaries defied him.[83]

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[79] Dupuis, op. cit., p. 126.

[80] The Asantehene stated that the Governor made the Fante "build up a wall, and told them that if they would fight the King he would help . . . that if I come down in twenty days that will be better than forty." Ibid., p. 130.

[81] Ibid. [82] Ibid.

[83] The Asante people had many other ways to use their energies, such as trade or farming. The Asantehene told both Bowdich and Dupuis that he had plans for

This aspect of the Asante disposition is very significant, as it permeates the Asante foreign policy throughout the nineteenth century. When the Asante were forced to go to war, linguists accompanied the army. Their role was to avert military action at the last moment, or after the war to use "their intelligence in negotiating the peace settlement,"[84] or in fixing the fine or tribute to be paid in the future by the conquered state.[85] Nana Boateng accompanied Bantamahene Amankwatia Abinowa to the coast battles as a political officer.[86]

Internally the Asantehene did whatever he could to avert war. Although he lost his temper several times[87] during the Dupuis negotiations, he considerably modified most of his initial demands, such as the 3200 oz. of gold he had asked from the British and

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building a grand palace for himself at Kumasi, using gold and ivory. He also had plans for the architectural improvement of Kumasi, Asafo, Bremang and other towns surrounding the capital. Ibid., p. 137; Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 256-257.

[84]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 248.

[85]In 1817 Asante had tributary relationship with at least nine states which paid their tribute in gold, slaves, livestock, agricultural products, or trading items. For example, Dagomba and Inta paid to Asante annually 500 slaves, 200 cows, 400 sheep, 400 cotton-cloths and 200 cotton silk cloths, Sahwi paid 200 peredwan, and Gyaman 100 peredwan and all large pieces of rock gold. Ibid., pp. 265-269.

[86]Boateng's son, Otee, was one of Asantehene's four linguists in 1817. Ibid., p. 239.

[87]Dupuis, op. cit., pp. 145-146.

Fante in connection with the Kommenda affair,[88] in order to reach a peace settlement. The British did not pay their requested sum of 1600 ounces (£6400) and the Governor's adamant offer of only 100 ounces (£400) for the Fante was finally accepted.[89] Not only did the Asantehene exert pressure for negotiation in the assembly, but he also sent his Muslim advisors, Bashaw and Abou Becr, to learn how much of the required gold the Governor was willing to pay.[90] The Asantehene assured Dupuis that he was not essentially in dispute with the white men but with his rebellious Fante subjects. So interested in Anglo-Asante peace treaty was he that Dupuis, while urging for ratification of the treaty, observed at Cape Coast:

> The king of Asante is so perfectly disposed to cooperate in all things for the promotion of mercantile interests of Great Britain, that if the present opportunity is suffered to escape us, it may be the means of crushing at a single blow, all future advancement towards commerce, or the cultivation and civilization of this part of Africa.[91]

Prince Adum, who was on the coast at this time under the Asantehene's instructions, accompanied Dupuis to plead with Governor Smith to ratify the treaty, but the

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[88]Major Ricketts, op. cit., p. 6.

[89]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 129, 144 footnote; see also the copy of the treaty and supplementary Appendix III in Ibid., pp. cxx-cxxiii.

[90]Ibid., pp. 148-153.

[91]Ibid., p. 189.

Governor and council refused to "abide by the treaty" or to "allow the natives to pay one farthing" of the sum agreed upon in Kumasi.[92] Following the Governor's refusal to ratify the treaty and the abortive voyage of the Asante ambassador to England,[93] Prince Adum and his retinue waited for the British government's reply for eight months. This was how long Dupuis suggested it would take for him to get to England to inform His Majesty and send the reply back to Cape Coast. They waited the time out "with admirable patience and forbearance, even without a murmur."[94] When ten months had elapsed after Dupuis' departure from Cape Coast, the Asante concluded they had been deceived and decided to blockade the coast.

There were other frustrating incidents for the Asante in the decades that followed. The takeover of the forts and settlement from the African Committee by the British government and the appointment of Sir Charles MacCarthy as Governor led to the Anglo-Asante War, partly because the new Governor held a low opinion of Asante and preferred to settle their differences

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[92] Ibid., p. 187.

[93] Sir George Collier, the Commander of the Tartar, refused to allow them aboard due to admiralty regulations against carrying civilians in naval ships without prior official approval by the Lords of the Admiralty. Ibid., p. 189.

[94] Ibid., p. 197.

through war.[95] Asante's diplomatic effort to settle the war by releasing their captive, Mr. J. T. William, and using Dutch Governor Last as a mediator failed.[96] It was not until after their defeat and the severe loss of twenty-four high-ranking Asante leaders in 1826 at Dodowa that peace was restored.[97] After the Dodowa war the Asante made a second gesture towards a peaceful settlement by releasing another British captive, Mr. Patrick Riley and his mulatto companion, Mr. John Duncan. This effort, too, was unsuccessful because the British did not reciprocate by releasing Asante captives on the coast.[98] Instead, they asked the Asantehene to send four thousand ounces of gold,[99] and two royal hostages to Cape Coast as security for peace. The Asantehene and his council gave the British envoys at Kumasi four reasons why he doubted that the British sincerely wanted peace and told them that

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[95]Ricketts, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

[96]Ibid., pp. 82-83.

[97]Those killed included the Asantehene's chief linguist Kankam, veteran of both Bowdich's and Dupuis' negotiations, and Ado Bradie, the Asantehene's nephew and resident at Cape Coast. Among those captured were Nana Otee, the Asantehene's linguist, and Owusu Dome, resident at Cape Coast in 1818, and several wives of rank. Ibid., pp. 124-125.

[98]Ibid., p. 150. The Asantehene particularly wanted his "head wife" and Chief Akyeampong released.

[99]At the exchange rate prevalent in 1820 this would have amounted to £80,000.

unless mutually satisfactory terms were arranged, the Asantehene was not interested in settlement. Fortunately, Captain J. Hingston, the unconciliatory commandant at Cape Coast, was soon replaced by the less adamant Major Ricketts, who was willing to receive any amount less than 4000 ounces of gold that the Asante could pay.[100] The Asante desired peace, particularly since trade between 1826 and 1831 was carried out with the coast through smuggling or through distant Assin ports west of Axim.[101]

Seven Decades of Diplomacy, War and Internal Conflict

The peace signed in April 1831[102] was to remain in effect until the 1860's, when the Gyani affair revived Anglo-Asante conflict.[103] This conflict lasted

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[100]The three reasons referred to concerned the release of William, Riley, and Duncan; the British failure to reduce the required 4000 ounces of gold; and the intelligence, relayed by Asante spies, that after this sum had been paid the other coastal potentates might ask the Asante to pay more money, which would be unacceptable. Ibid., Ch. IX.

[101]Maclean's period was recognized by both Africans and European merchants as a time of great prosperity and trade growth. C. 412 I (1865), pp. 233-234.

[102]See a copy of this treaty in C. 456 (1855), p. 12.

[103]An incident took place in 1853 when two Assini chiefs, Otibu and Gabiri, asked the Asantehene to assist them in rejoining Asante kingdom but this move was stopped by Fante, who executed the chiefs as conspirators. See also C. 703 (1853), pp. 1-16, 21-24. When the British asked the Asantehene to sign another treaty

off and on until 1873, when the British under Sir Garnet Wolseley invaded Kumasi.[104]

The renewed Anglo-Asante conflict in 1863 reflected the Asante's concern that her political and economic interests would be endangered by the Kwasi Gyani incident. When the new Governor, Sir Richard Pine, arrived in Ghana late in 1862 the country was enjoying an unusually great economic prosperity. The Fante, Assin, and Asante had forgotten their former disputes. This new, prosperous era, obviously what the Asante had long been seeking, was due to the benefits realized by many of the Asante traders. As one African on the scene noted:

> All the kings and chiefs in the interior were in perfect harmony with one another; the Ashantees were in the most friendly relations with Fantees and Britain authorities; trade was in the most flourishing condition; bands of Ashantee merchants poured daily from the interior into the coast towns loaded with gold dust, ivory, and other marketable goods . . . The Ashantees, who were the life blood of the Gold Coast commerce

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reaffirming their non interference with protected areas, Asantehene Kwaku Duah I vigorously objected and exonerated himself of any wrong-doing in a long letter to Lieut. Gov. B. Cruickshank. Cd. 456 (1855), pp. 3-10. See the proposed treaty, pp. 11-12.

[104]There is an extensive correspondence dealing with the Asante invasion; see Select Bibliography for a complete list of this correspondence; Garnet Wolseley, The Story of a Soldier's Life, Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co., 1903; H. Brackenbury, The Ashantee War, 2 vols. London, 1874; D. Kimble, A Political History of Ghana, 1850-1928, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, Ch. VII.

were now bent on carrying on an extensive trade with the sea towns.[105]

But soon after Governor Pine's arrival, the Asantehene requested the extradition from the coast of an Asante citizen named Kwasi Gyani who had smuggled gold nuggets from Kumasi and refused to return there to face trial.[106] In his demand for Gyani's extradition the Asantehene cited the previous Anglo-Asante treaties, which provided that in the event of the criminal's taking refuge from the Protectorate in Asante, or vice versa, the Asantehene or the British respectively would send him back for trial.

In a long letter to the Governor the Asantehene explained the circumstances surrounding the affair. He clearly indicated that traditional Asante judicial proceedings had been utilized and every opportunity given to Gyani to come to Kumasi to answer the charges; that Gyani had sworn the great oath of Asante and promised thrice to come to the court, but all three times had failed to appear; that after this Gyani had run away to Cape Coast.[107] In conclusion the Asantehene left

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[105]Africanus B. Horton, Letters on the Political Condition of the Gold Coast. London: Frank Cass, 1970, p. 53.

[106]Gov. Richard Pine's letters to Duke of New Castle in C. 385 (1864), pp. 1-5.

[107]Correspondence between the Asantehene and Gov. Richard Pine in C. 385 (1864), pp. 6-7.

no doubt that if the Governor refused to extradite Gyani, he would be responsible for the consequences, because he had not observed the previous treaties; "So you must not blame me for keeping my subjects from coming down to Cape Coast, but when any disturbances arise then all the blame is upon you because you have broken the rule of government."[108]

To demonstrate his seriousness in this affair and his fear that trade would be unnecessarily disrupted, the Asantehene sent a distinguished embassy to the coast.[109] The chief of this delegation was a prince who was accompanied by important followers, very well dressed to negotiate with the Governor, the European merchants and the Fante at the Coast. The ambassadors' ability as orators, an influential factor in their appointment, was also remarkable: "The case of the King of Ashantee was set forth in a speech by his war-axe bearer, which was remarkable for its fluency, rhetorical power, and argumentative clearness."[110] Many British merchants were won to the Asantehene's side

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[108] C. 393 (1864), pp. 3-4. The Governor refused extradition because he believed Gyani's life would be in danger.

[109] This act was in keeping with Asantehene Kwaku Duah's noteworthy characteristic of preferring to settle conflicts amicably. C. 3064 (1881), p. 69. Horton observed that this Asantehene was "one of the most peaceful rulers that has ever sat on the throne." (Op. cit., p. 54.)

[110] Ibid.

and supported the extradition of Gyani, but the Governor's decision was with the Fante chiefs, some of whom had been bribed by the wealthy Gyani.[111]

The Governor's refusal left the Asantehene with two alternatives. First, he could have decided not to pursue the matter any further. This would have been misconstrued by the Fante and other potential Asante escapees as weakness or cowardice on his part. Furthermore it would have weakened the Asantehene's authority in tributary areas and within Asante proper. Second, the Asantehene could have declared war, as his predecessor had done in a similar case when Chebo and Aputei took refuge in the protectorates. Diplomacy having failed,[112] the Asante people chose the second alternative and sent a force of 30,000 men under Prince Owusu Kokoo,[113] the brother of Prince John Owusu

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[111]Gyani refused to go back to Kumasi, pleading with the Governor that if he did he would be executed. The Governor asked the Asantehene for tangible evidence proving Gyani's guilt but the Asantehene considered this a moot question and with the support of the Colonial Secretary the Governor refused to surrender Gyani. See numerous letters in C. 385 (1864), exchanged between Kumasi, Cape Coast and Westminster.

[112]Thomas Frederick Elliot, Assistant Colonial Undersecretary, testified to the Select Parliamentary Committee in 1865: "I know that the Ashantees are perfectly cognizant of the important treaties, and they have never began a war with us without over and over again appealing to any existing treaty." C. 412 (1865), p. 8.

[113]Horton, op. cit., p. 57. This was the Akyeampimhene Oheneba Owusu Kokoo. See IAS/AS 106, p. 7-8; ADM 11/1728

Ansah.[114] As a result of this Anglo-Asante conflict trade in imports and exports in the area dropped severely in 1863: Imports from £145,100 in 1863 to £76,955 and exports from £102,086 to £53,764.[115] The war was ended by the Governor's proclamation in January 1866 after consultation with "four duly accredited ambassadors of the King of Ashantee" in December 1865 and January 1866.[116]

However, the period of peace did not last long. Oheneba Owusu Kokoo, following consultation with Prince Owusu Ansah[117] and fearing the effects of heavy rain on his army, returned to Kumasi after two victories over Fante forces. The newly assembled Anglo-Fante forces were frustrated by Owusu Kokoo's withdrawal before a decisive battle: the British marched a protectorate force to Pra but abandoned the intended invasion of Kumasi due to heavy mortality and adverse weather conditions. The Asante during all this time had

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[114] C. 385 (1864), p. 11. The Governor, however, did not believe he was to blame for the war, as he wrote in his letter to Asantehene Kwaku Dua I: "You say that if disturbances arise I am to blame; but unless you cause disturbances they will not take place I hope." Ibid., p. 7.

[115] C. 941 (1874), p. 4. The British merchants were well aware of adverse effects on trade during Anglo-Asante conflicts. C. 412 I (1865), pp. 145, 233-35.

[116] Horton, op. cit., p. 74.

[117] C. 385 (1864), p. 11.

maintained good diplomatic relations with their coastal allies, the Dutch and the Elminas. The Fante did not look favorably on this alliance, and when the Anglo-Dutch treaty of March 1867 proposed to partition their spheres of control along Sweet River (located between Cape Coast and Elmina), a strong Fante-led opposition emerged.[118] This opposition eventually led to the formation of the Fante confederation partially to check Asante's power and influence on the coast.[119] Asante diplomacy was not sufficient to keep down a strong protest movement west of Sweet River; the Asantehene, in response to Elmina's appeal for help--sent through ambassador Ando who came to Kumasi for the funeral of Kwaku Duah I--sent Chief Akyeampong with a small army to apprehend the rebels. From Apollonia to Elmina, Akyeampong's name struck "terror and consternation to the brest of every Fantee resident in

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[118]The treaty gave the Dutch control over the following forts and territories west of Sweet River: Dixcove, Sekondi, Komenda, Beyin, Denkyera, Wassaw and Apollonia. East of this river the British took control of Mori, Kormantin, Apam and Dutch Accra. C. 3900 (1867), pp. 1-4.

[119]Horton, who knew the confederate members and their objective well, once noted: "It makes the King of Ashantee for the first time throw off his supercilious disregard of the formerly disunited Fantee race, and tremble for his kingdom . . . the King of Ashantee felt the influence of the Confederation, and sent conciliatory messengers to its court at Mankessim." Op. cit., p. 160. The British officials opposed the Confederacy as a "dangerous conspiracy." C. 171 (1873), p. 2. For a detailed analysis of Fante confederation see D. Kimble, op. cit., Ch. VI.

the Dutch Territory."[120] Thus the Asantehene was willing to support his allies all the way, even militarily, as he fully realized that he derived considerable economic, military and political support from them against the British and Fante.

On the southeastern front the year-long trade war between Ewe and Ga, which threatened disruption of commerce, drew in the Asante as participants shortly after the Asantehene's death.[121] Before his death the Asantehene had dispatched his ambassadors to the Ewe to offer his assistance. But here too diplomacy failed, and in the military assistance that followed the new Asantehene naturally allied himself with the Ewe, since the Ga were supported by Asante's enemy--the British.[122] The Asante even now displayed their willingness to use diplomacy in settling their disputes. When the Acting Administrator, Mr. Simpson, went to Akwamu early in 1869 and the Akwamuhene, after consulting with his elders, contemplated executing him, it was an Asante general who intervened, arguing that Mr. Simpson was not the Governor of the Gold Coast,

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[120]Horton, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

[121]In this conflict Ga, Akwapim, Krobo, Kyerepon and Adangbe were on one side and on the other, the Akwamu and Asante.

[122]Horton, op. cit., pp. 81-83. Most of these territories were Danish allies ceded to the British in 1850. C. 1238 (1850), pp. 8-10.

that there was no dispute with the white men, and finally that Mr. Simpson should be released.[123] His recommendation was accepted. This general was Adu Bofuo, the Gyasehene, who was the overall commander of the Asante forces during this war, generally remembered in tradition as the Hwem war.[124]

The failure of Asante diplomacy on the two fronts--southwestern and southeastern--and the military backing to supplement it intensified the conflict between the Asante and their allies and the British and their allies. During the southeastern campaign the Asante wanted to launch another attack from the southwest with reinforcements led by Akyeampong and across the Pra with a third army led by the Asantehene Kofi Karikari. But this plan was abandoned because of the casualties suffered by Adu Bofuo, heavy rains and lack of adequate supplies. The mood in Kumasi was that war was inevitable as soon as the Asante were ready: Gyani was still in the coast, Asante's supremacy was seriously questioned by both the coastal states and the British, Asante traders were restricted to various coastal towns, and their main source of weapons was their long-time allies, the Dutch.

However, before the Asante could acquire

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[123] Ibid., p. 102.

[124] Tradition provided by Gyashene Mensa Abebio.

sufficient weaponry the British pulled a diplomatic coup completely unexpected in Asante. Responding to pressure from their merchants (especially F. and A. Swanzy Co.) and recent coastal political and economic turmoil, the British negotiated a treaty with the Netherlands in 1870 in which the Dutch transferred their territory to Britain in 1871.[125] The Asante were infuriated by this transfer, and their reaction left no doubt as to their future course especially since they considered Elmina their subject. According to Ramseyer and Kuhne, who were still at Kumasi at that time:

> To measure themselves for once with the white men was the secret desire of every Ashantee chief. That the critical hour had arrived they all acknowledged when the news came of the surrender of Elmina. They could not allow the kingdom to be broken up bit by bit, as they considered . . . every one knew that this campaign was very different from that against Krepe. It was to decide once and for all whether the Fantees were to be subject to Ashantees or the Ashantees to them.[126]

Until then Asante felt ready to attack, their initial outward reaction was to maintain a conciliatory attitude through diversionary tactice--they sent ambassadors to Elmina to tell the chief to wait patiently for Asante reaction; a second embassy was sent to the British through Prince Owusu Ansah to inform the British

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[125]See C. 670 (1872) for negotiations and Asante reactions, pp. 1-42 and Appendix pp. 43-44 for the treaty.

[126]Ramseyer and Kuhne, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

government that the Asante were willing to forget the secession of this part of the kingdom, although it was very painful.[127] As the Asante tried to stockpile weapons and salt, the British officials in Gold Coast were frantically exchanging correspondence with the colonial and war offices in preparation for the final confrontation, which culminated in the battle of Amoafo, the invasion of Kumasi and the signing of the Fomena treaty early in 1874.[128]

In the treaty of Fomena, the Asante were to pay 50,000 ounces of gold for war indemnity, to relinquish their sovereignty claims over the states of Denkyera, Assin, Akim, Adansi and Elmina, and to guarantee freedom of commerce between interior states and the littoral cities. This treaty was ratified by all the major Amantuo in the kingdom.[129] The war could probably have been prevented, but there was too much at stake on both

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[127] Ibid. The transfer meant loss of £80 previously paid annually by the Dutch to Asante. The Asante also argued that when they acquired Elmina they had paid to the Dutch £9,000 debt owed by Denkyerahene Ntim Gyakari to the Dutch. C. 670 (1872), pp. 4, 13, and 35; C. 819 (1873), p. 3.

[128] C. 922 (1874), pp. 66-68. The conflict started with the Asante invasion of the Protectorate early in 1873. C. 801 (1873); C. 804 (1873). Some of the invading Asante army was recruited from Asante's tributary state ruled by Kra Dente near Atebubu. C. 3386 (1882), pp. 69-70. The Fanti were defeated and routed by Asante on June 5, 1873. C. 890 (1874), pp. 196-199; C. 274 (1874), pp. 1-2.

[129] C. 1006 (1874), pp. 10-11.

sides. According to Ramseyer and Kuhne, who were at Kumasi at the beginning of the war, "the real reason of the war was that the British had refused for ten years to give up the chief Gjanin; this had likewise been the cause of the fruitless expedition of '63-'64."[130] There were many other factors besides the Gyani affair which together pushed the ultimate confrontation: the death of the seasoned Asantehene Kwaku Duah and the installation of the young and weak Kofi Karikari[131] to the Golden Stool; the swearing of the highest nobility (probably the Mamponghene) during the installation ceremonies that "my business shall be war," Anglo-Dutch agreements and territorial transfers in 1868 and 1872, the commitment made by major Amantuo-hene to demand a heavy ransom for the four European captives at Kumasi, which the Asantehene, Mamponghene and Adansihene opposed;[132] the Asantehemaa's contempt

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[130]Ramseyer and Kuhne, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

[131]In 1871 when a member of the royal family committed adultery, the culprits were tried by the Asante Kotoko, found guilty and executed, although Kofi Karikari strenuously supported banishment instead; "His counsellors demurred," ibid., p. 147. See also contrast between Karikari and Kwaku Duah's relationship with Kotoko members, p. 201.

[132]Ibid., p. 160. These prisoners were the above two missionaries, Mrs. Ramseyer and a French trader, M. Bonnat, all captured by Buabasahene Adu Bufuo in the 1867-1868 war in Krobo. The Asantehene stated that he paid Adu Bofuo £1,000 ransom on behalf of the British just before the invasion of Kumasi. C. 907 (1874), p. 8.

of British power;[133] severe economic dislocation due to the blockade imposed on Asante, and political undermining of Asante authority by the British actions.[134]

Although the Asante lost the battle and suffered what they set out to impose on the other side, they did not lose their determination to protect their interests, either against the British[135] or against the former Asante dependencies between the Asante and the coast. This was to be accomplished through various policies aimed, between 1874 and 1896, at consolidating Kotoko rule in Asante kingdom through political pressure[136]

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[133]She once remarked in a Kotoko debate in 1872 about Mr. H. Plange's low ransom offer, "I am only a woman, but would fight the governor with my left hand," ibid., p. 181. On October 22, 1872, after a lengthy meeting in Bantama, the members of Asante Kotoko swore to go to war. By November the Asantehemaa had modified her stand and began passionately urging the release of the white captives to avoid disaster in Asante, for which future generations would blame her son. Ibid., p. 247.

[134]The cession of Danish possessions to Britain at a low price of £10,000 in 1850 decreased potential Asante allies and trade outlets on the coast. See C. 1238 (1850), pp. 3-11; C. 1171 (1850), pp. 2-5; see also MacDonnell, op. cit., pp. 82-87.

[135]The British aim was to establish direct political and trading contact with Asante dependencies. Gov. S. Rowe's instructions to Capt. R. Lonsdale in C. 3386 (1882), pp. 11-14, 49-51; Gov. Rowe to Earl of Kimberly in ibid., pp. 27-32, and Capt. Lonsdale's Report in ibid., pp. 57-82.

[136]Early in 1882 the Asantehene against Gyaman and Adansi through Prince Owusu Ansah and Gov. S. Rowe. C. 3386 (1882), pp. 44-51, 54-55, 102-103; Capt. Rupert Lonsdale's Report of his mission to Ashantee and Gaman in C. 3687 (1883), pp. 108-128.

or military campaigns, or at maintaining a friendly or tolerant relationship with the British government.[137] The Asantehene pursued this familiar course with the advice of Asante Kotoko and its members, who helped to debate and formulate these policies as they had done before the war. Ramseyer and Kuhne observed that "the reins of the Ashantee government are not exclusively in the hands of the king, nor does he possess unlimited power, but shares it with the council which includes, besides his majesty, his mother, the three first chiefs of the kingdom and a few nobles of Kumasi. The council is called the Asante Kotoko, . . . It is this council which rules the entire kingdom, . . . In important cases all the other chiefs of the kingdom are called together to discuss the case."[138] The Asante Kotoko influenced the destoolment of Asantehene Kofi Karikari after the war and selected his brother, Mensa Bonsu, as his successor.[139] They removed him, too, when he

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[137]All the principal Ahene and Amantuohene participated in the major discussion connected with Capt. Lonsdale's missions to Kumasi. Ibid., pp. 59-66; 111-112.

[138]Ramseyer and Kuhne, op. cit., Appendix III. The three primary chiefs of the kingdom were Dwabenhene, Mamponghene, and Bekwaihene. M. Bonnat observes differently. Gros, op. cit., pp. 188-189, but compare with ibid., pp. 216-217. See also T. E. Bowdich, An Essay on the Superstitions, Customs and Arts, Common to the Ancient Egyptians, Abyssinians, and Ashantees, Paris: J. Smith, 1821 (hereafter referred to as An Essay . . .), p. 22.

[139]Karikari was destooled for running away from battlefield in Amoafo and for desecration of Bantama

proved inefficient,[140] and chose Kwaku Duah I as the new Asantehene. Following the death of Kwaku Duah,[141] the Asante Kotoko foiled Kofi Karikari's attempt at a comeback and supported Kwaku Duah III, generally known as Prempeh I, as the new Asantehene over the other contender, Barima Atwereboana.[142] Although the choice of Prempeh split the Asante Kotoko into two factions, energetic campaigning by Prempeh and his followers finally reunited the nation after three years of the most serious civil war in Asante history.[143] It was the Asante Kotoko that decided to wage war against Juaben, which wanted to suceede and become an independent state like Adansi. Early in the 1890's the Kotoko sent an army against Nkoransa tributary state,

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mausoleum. C. 4052 (1884), pp. 46-59, 82. His brother Mensa was destooled for not listening to the Kotoko advice. C. 4477 (1884-85), pp. 42-44. Karikari's attempt at a comeback after Mensa's destoolment was a failure.

[140]Commission to Ashantee: Capt. Barrow's Ashantee Report in C. 4052 (1884), p. 31. The Asantehemaa was also destooled for misadvising her two sons. Traditions provided by sev eral elders in Kumasi. See also Capt. Barrow's Report, pp. 43, 83.

[141]Kwaku Duah died of small pox on June 10, 1884. C. 4477 (1885), pp. 111, 135.

[142]Prempeh I was enstooled on March 26, 1888. C. 5615 (1888), p. 2.

[143]For prelude to this war see Capt. Barrow's Report, op. cit., C. 4052 (1884), pp. 30-59; C. 4052 (1884), pp. 72-74.

which intended to sever her traditional subservient relationship with the Asante.[144]

In external affairs, too, the Kotoko decided what was to be done, as when, for example, embassies had to be sent to the coast during the Golden Axe affair, in 1881.[145] A look at the makeup of the Kotoko when Ramseyer and Kuhne were at Kumasi will reveal some of the influential figures in Asante government and policies. Ramseyer and Kuhne ranked these members in five groups, according to how important each position was to the kingdom. The first group consisted of the Asantehene, Asantehemaa, Dwabenhene, Bekwaihene and Mamponghene. The second group consisted of provincial chiefs such as Kokofu, Nsuta, and king's councillors such as Adontenhene, Nkwantahene, Bantamahene and Asafohene, Samanghene and Buabasahene. The third group was composed of influential linguists such as Boakye Tenten, the husband of the Asantehemaa, head linguist Opoku, Nsumankwahene, and head executioner. The fourth group was made up of heads of lesser stools such as Nkrahene, king's hammockmen and court criers. The last group consisted of chamberlains and private

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[144]C. 7917 (1896), pp. 100-107, 116-119.

[145]It was not clear to the British on the coast whether the gold axe sent by the Asante in this mission was a symbol of peace or war. The British thought it meant declaration of the war while the Asante held the contrary view. C. 3064 (1881), pp. 57, 62-63, 150-159.

councillors and other minor functionaries, some of them related to occupants of higher stools.[146]

In the nineteenth century the role of Asante elders remained important to the proper and smooth functioning of Asante government. We shall analyze a few major instances to understand the significant role played by the members of Asante Kotoko internally and externally.[147] Let us first look at the internal attempt to solve the Anglo-Asante differences. Since several people have dealt with the Anglo-Asante relationship from the European point of view, my purpose here will be to deal with it from the Asante point of view.[148] The collective nature of policy formation that characterized the Asante state in the eighteenth century continued in existence. In 1819 G. A. Robertson wrote about the Asante government:

> The sovereignty of Ashantee is not, in many instances, absolute: a senate of chiefs regulates the affairs of Government, and decides all disputes as a supreme tribunal. Even claims on the

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[146] Ramseyer and Kuhne, op. cit., pp. 308-309.

[147] When the Governor asked that the gold axe be given up the Asantehene before conceding to this request assembled the whole of Asanteman to debate and concur on this issue. The axe, used by one of the past Asantehene, was so precious that it was kept in the same room as the Golden Stool. See "History of the 'Gold Axe' of Ashanti" in C. 3064 (1881), pp. 154-155. This Axe was finally given to Queen Victoria in October 1881. C. 3386 (1884), pp. 7-9.

[148] See for example the works of Claridge and Ellis cited in earlier chapters.

> crown are determined by their opinion; and where individuals have been treated either with injustice or severity, redress is given agreeably to the determination of the majority of votes.[149]

This belief in majority rule is seen in the Asante Kotoko's collective effort to ratify Anglo-Asante treaty with the Bowdich mission, the Fomena treaty,[150] the Asante embassy to the coast in 1881 led by Boakye Tenten and Appia's mission to Elmina to settle Anglo-Asante disputes.

The delegation sent to the coast during the Golden Axe affair in April 1881, headed by Prince Boakye Tenten, was made up of representatives from the major groups of Asante Kotoko.[151] For example, besides Prince Boakye there were two other princes attached to the mission, and Nananom Amoaku Atta and Kwamena Asante were sent as representatives of the first and second Kumasi chiefs Bantamahene and Asafohene. The Amantuo of Mampong, Bekwai, Nsuta and Kokofu also sent their

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[149]G. A. Robertson, op. cit., p. 198.

[150]The Fomena Treaty, after ratification by Asante Kotoko, was delivered to the British on the coast by an embassy which "consisted of a son of the King, and Representatives from every tribe comprising the Ashantee Kingdom." C. 1006 (1874), p. 1.

[151]Capt. Rupert Lonsdale's letter of 5 Sept. to Colonial Secretary, Accra in ADM 11/1482; C. 3064 (1881), pp. 135-139; C. 3386 (1881), pp. 3-4; Another mission had gone to the coast earlier in the year headed by Yaw Boroni. C. 3064 (1881), p. 113.

representatives.[152] There were also about twenty chiefs and attendants of different ranks representing other segments in the society. In all, the delegation consisted of between three hundred and fifty and four hundred people. It was difficult for the British officials at Cape Coast and Accra to find suitable accommodations for such a large entourage.

An analysis of Appia's embassy sent to the coast in 1889 reveals that its top-ranking officials were clearly part of the administrative representation of Asante Kotoko.[153] Initially this delegation was to be composed of a thousand people made up of "one of his (Asantehene's) influential chiefs, together with many chiefs and messengers from several chiefs of Ashanti."[154] The chief delegate was later described by the Governor as a "man of high rank and position in Ashanti."[155] The object of this delegation was to request the Governor to return certain Asante subjects

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[152]C. 3064 (1881), p. 156. Juaben did not send anyone, due to the recent war over Prempeh's succession, but Adansi had five representatives in this mission, the tributary state of Gyaman was represented by one chief and five followers, and Tekyiman sent one chief and two attendants. Confidential Minute Paper no. 643, dated 9-19-1881, in ADM 11/1482.

[153]Correspondence Relating to Affairs in Ashanti, Feb. 12, 1889, in ADM 11/1482.

[154]Griffith to Knutsford, Sept. 8, 1890 in ADM 11/1482.

[155]Ibid.

who had left Asante after some disturbance. What was interesting about this mission was its similarity to the mission led by Boakye Tenten in 1881 during the "hand axe" affair, especially with regard to procedure. The District Commissioner's telegram to the Governor stated that the main purpose of the embassy was "to obtain your aid in getting independent districts of Juabin, Bequay, Amdansi, and Kokofu transfered back to the new king to make Ashanti as it was in old days, and that all Ashanti refugees now in the protectorate be sent back."[156] The District Commissioner advised the Governor not to submit to this because a strong Asante nation might turn against the British.

The members of this delegation came from all over Asante, as was common when sending important deputations.[157] The Asantehene was personally represented by Appia, who was in charge of the mission. Other representatives from Kumasi were sent by: Akwamuhene Asafo Boakye, who sent Akwasi Kwadwo or Quandoh; Asantehemaa, who sent Aminah Kwadwo (this was probably a woman, as the Asantehemaa has her own linguist who represents her in important missions); the Bantamahene Amankwatia, who sent Yaw Awua; Tafohene, who deputed one Kwame; Asumegyahene, who Nana Kwame; Ejisuhene Nana Afrani,

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[156] Ibid., Enclosure 6 in no. 9.

[157] Ibid., Enclosure 11.

who deputed another Kwame; Offinsohena Appia Osei, who deputed Kwadwo Winsah Kwame, and Jamasihene Owusu Sekyere, who sent Yaw Donko. Mampong was represented by Yaw Manu.

Kokofu was represented by Kwame Dwumo; Bekwai's ambassador was Yaw Attabrah. Juabenhemaa Boatenma sent Ankra Kwasi, Juabenhene Yaw Sapong sent Ankra Yaw, and Akyeamehene of Kumasi sent Yaw Agyei. Two other Kumasi Amanhene sent two of their representatives. Other members of the delegation included Yaw Dada and Osei, described as Asantehene's captains; Yaw Boakye, Asantehene's linguist; Akyeampong Dabbang, swordbearer; Acquah (Akwasi?) Yennah, court crier, and Kwasi Gyakyi, the butler.

The head linguist for the delegation was Kyeame Yaw Boakye. After the customary conveyance of greetings from the Asantehene to the Queen of England, he stated the Asante people's wish that the territories that had seceded from the Asante be returned because "If these districts are kept independent troubles will keep arising between them, whereas if they are restored to our king he will rule over all and trade will improve, troubles will stop and roads will always be clear."[158] As to the refugees, the Okyeame stated that the Asantehene "would receive them all back kindly and regard them as his royal subjects." After the Okyeame

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[158] Ibid., Enclosure 11.

finished, Appia elaborated the same theme at length, saying that it was the wish of the Asante people that all these districts be returned and all refugees be delivered to the delegation. Osei, the Asantehene's other representative, also spoke. He was probably a relative of the royal family.[159] The British government (through the Governor) replied that it would not intervene on behalf of Asante in those areas which had declared their independence. This left the Asantehene with a free hand to act as he saw fit, which he did between then and 1895.[160]

In the following year the British expedition under Sir Francis Scott arrived in Kumasi and carried out a bloodless coup.[161] At a public meeting held to

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[159]The entire delegation was about 200 men out of an anticipated 1000 in April. Ibid., Enclosure 13.

[160]The Asantehene felt that the Asante views were not well explained to the British Government at home by the Gold Coast colonial officials. Mr. Hendrik Vroom, the African District Commissioner misrepresented the Asante position to the Europeans on the coast after his return from Kumasi and the Asantehene had to write a letter of protest to Governor Griffith. C. 7917 (1896), pp. 183-185. The Asantehene then recruited Prince Owusu Ansah (the son of the late Asante Prince by the same name) to lead the Asante Embassy to England to explain this misunderstanding to Queen Victoria late in 1894. Ibid., pp. 187-188, 233-236. C. 7918 (1896), pp. 1-4. The Colonial Secretary urged the Governor to stop the Embassy from going to England without success. When the Embassy arrived in London early in May, 1895, the Colonial Secretary refused to meet with them or allow them to meet with the Queen. C. 7917 (1896), pp. 236-237. C. 7918 (1896), p. 54.

[161]This marked the beginning of direct British intervention policy in Asante politics in lieu of the abstention policy of the previous years. All

discuss the unpaid balance from the Treaty of Fomena, the Asantehene and most of the members of the Asante Kotoko were arrested by the British and taken to the coast. Among those exiled with Prempeh I were the Asantehemaa Yaa Kyaa, the Bantamahene Amankwatia, Akwamuhene Asafo Boakye, Kyidomhene Oheneba Boateng, Akyeampimhene Oheneba Subiri, Mamponghene Osokye, Offinsohene Kwadwo Kwau, and Ejisuhene Kwasi Afrane.[162] This act destroyed Asante morale. Even worse, they did not know whether to fight without their leaders or to wait for the return of these leaders by the British. The last stroke came early in 1900 when Gov. Hodson came to Kumasi to demand the Golden Stool, impose a tax on the Asante and assure them that their king would never be returned.[163] Asking for time to think

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intelligence indicated that the Asante "confederation was at that time weaker than it had ever been in its whole history." Col. Sec. Hodson to Gov. B. Griffith, Jan. 2, 1894 in ADM 11/1482. "Memorandum as to the policy to be adopted towards Ashanti," in C. 7917 (1896), pp. 224-227; C. 7918 (1896), pp. 22, 41-42. Four months before the expedition arrived in Kumasi the Asante Embassy in England was pleading, in vain, for a meeting with the Colonial Secretary to settle these differences amicably but the Colonial Secretary would not concede. C. 7918 (1896), pp. 55-61, 98. The European scramble for Africa was nearing its peak to the north and east of Asante. See a major work on this process Boniface I. Obichere, West African States and European Expansion, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971 especially pp. 146-147.

[162]Information provided by Nana Owusu Ansah and Nsumankwahene stool historian; Confidential Minute Papers, Accession no. 2964; ADM 11/1728, p. 18

[163]Ibid., Ward, History . . ., op. cit.,

about the Governor's demands, the Asante convened the remaining leaders of the weakened Kotoko. The final call to fight was issued by Ejisuhemaa Yaa Asantewa, and the Kotoko, taking its last stand in its role as the sovereign national council of Asante, declared war against the British.[164] At the conclusion of the conflict, the prominent leaders, among them Yaa Asantewa and Kokofuhene Yaw Konkroma (or Asibe), were sent to the coast or exiled with the Asantehene in the Seychelles Islands.

Finally the nation that Osei Tutu and his successors had so painstakingly built lost her sovereignty to the British government. Asante became part of the British Empire, and the judicial-administrative functions of the Kotoko were immediately taken over by the martial law government, to be replaced by civil colonial administration in the 1920's. By the time Asante lost her sovereignty, the tributary states which she had controlled at the zenith of her power in the 1820's had gradually gained their independence. These were states like Gyaman, Dogomba, Wassaw, Denkyera and Akim, each of which, on behalf of the Asanteman, was directly or

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pp. 308-309; see also ADM 4/1/109; Gen. Sir James Willcocks, The Romance of Soldiering and Sport, New York: Cassell, 1925, pp. 129-132.

[164]This started what is known in literature as Asante revolt or uprising or Yaa Asantewa war which lasted from March to October 1900.

indirectly ruled by a member of the Asante Kotoko.[165]

The rulers of each of these tributary states were required to come to Kumasi during the yam festival each September to renew their allegiance;[166] to have an Asante resident and tax collector in their area; and to conduct trade with the northern markets in Salaga, Kintampo, Begho, Yendi, or with the southern littoral towns only through Kumasi.[167] These states were ruled according to local traditions and customs, and Asante residents were present in these areas mainly to transmit intelligence back to Kumasi, and to facilitate the collection of taxes, tributes and gifts or the raising of army levies.[168] One of the foremost Asante traditional historians, commenting on this Asante rule

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[165]For example, the Akwamuhene ruled Denkyera and Opoku ruled Akwamu. Bowdich, op. cit., p. 187.

[166]This was the time when charges against any of them were filed and replacements made where necessary. Some states, like Dagomba, sent deputies to Kumasi instead.

[167]The items in this lucrative trade were: kola nuts, gold, slaves, weapons, and miscellaneous European goods such as rum, and cotton cloth. See Kwame Arhin, Aspects . . ., op. cit., p. 363; see also Dupuis, op. cit., p. 157. Traders in Asante were free of government intervention in regard to the choice of markets they desired to transact their trade. Bowdich, op. cit., p. 208. See also C. 3386 (1882), pp. 27-30, 71-73.

[168]When Odumata was fighting Nkoranza, he did so with Gyaman forces. Bowdich, op. cit., p. 189; when Opoku was fighting Akimhene Atta early in the 19th century, he sent for an Accra contingent to join him, Bowdich, op. cit., p. 193. C. 3386 (1882), pp. 69-70.

over her tributaries said, "Asante were the conquerors but not colonizers. As long as the conquered people acknowledged the Asante sovereignty over them, agreed to send annual tribute or other special gift or tax contributions to Kumasi, and agreed to send an army when ordered by the Asantehene, the Asante were glad to leave them alone."[169] If the Asante had adopted more direct administrative structures, like those instituted by the British in colonial Ghana, recurring tributary revolts during interregna would have been less common.

But such a direct administrative approach was not necessary, according to Asante custom. When Dupuis suggested to the Asantehene that he implement a system of raising revenue through custom and tariff duties on the trade carried out in Asante, he refused, because the trade pattern was different in Asante:

> None but the great men trade here, the same as myself. Sometimes I lend gold, if they are good people; and then I cannot say, give the gold back. If they come from a different country to trade in Coomassay, they make friends, and give me gold, when they buy and sell gold. Besides, some traders are kings' sons and brothers and great captains: I must not say to them, give me gold, but I must give them gold and provisions, and send them home happy and rich, that it may be known in other countries that I am great, and know what is right. Thus I please my Gods and they make me strong.[170]

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[169]Nana Owusu Ansah. Similar corraborating traditions were collected from Bantama stool historians, Anantahene Appia Dankwa II and Akwamu stool historian. See also Fynn, op. cit., p. 75.

[170]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 167.

It was not necessary for the Asantehene to amass huge sums of money through trade or otherwise. Wealth was not in itself as highly valued in Asante as were virtues like righteousness and generosity. In one gold dispute the Asantehene was reminded by his wise Okyeame that he should not be wealthier than his subjects, because ". . . strangers will go away and say, only the King has gold, that will not be good; but let them say the king has gold, all his captains have gold and all his people have gold, then your country will look handsome and the bush people fear you."[171] The Asantehene accepted this reminder with appreciation. Most of the functions and activities for which the Asantehene needed money, such as army and national festivals and ceremonies, were financed through specially levied taxes, and tributary fees just before or while those activities were in progress. For example, apeatuo was a special tax levied before a war;[172] it was named after Nana Appea, who first collected it.[173] Funds necessary

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[171]Bowdich, op. cit., p. 200.

[172]Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., p. 112 and Mampong stool historians; see also Bowdich, op. cit., pp. 196-197.

[173]The Asante army was largely decentralized and every Obirempong was held responsible for raising the required army or commissioned to go to war on his own account. The bulk of expenses were financed through a similar decentralized system at the local level. In the war booty and indemnity assessed on the vanquished paid these expenses. Hence the Asante monarch did not require a large treasury for war. See also Reindorf, op. cit., p. 195.

for festivals and ceremonies or debts incurred by the Asantehene to pay for them were raised from the Abirempong, through a well-defined system of apportionment depending on the size and importance of each Obirempong or Omantuohene. All this made is unnecessary for Otumfuo to have large sums of money.[174]

The pattern followed by the Asantehene in redistributing his treasury to the Asante people directly or through the Amantuo fitted well with the system of raising funds. During the national festivals or when any important Ohene died, the Asantehene, through his linguists and sword-bearers sent customary gifts to his tributary heads, to Obirempong, or to the family of the deceased. On one occasion the Asantehene distributed over 2,000 ounces of gold and a considerable amount of merchandise such as rum, gunpowder, and cotton pieces to the tributary kings of Banna, Salaga, Nkoransa, and Dagomba.[175] Much redistribution was also achieved through the generous hospitality of the Asantehene to any of his subjects who visited Kumasi for business or pleasure. Other officials who performed any

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[174]Tradition provided by Samanghene and his elders. The Obirempong raised the necessary sum by apportioning it among the Ahene and asking each of them to raise his share from his subjects. Revenue was also raised from death duties, trade, court fines and fees, gold mining. Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., Ch. X.

[175]Dupuis, op. cit., p. 170. The 2000 ounces of gold equalled £8,000.

service for the Asantehene or Asante were rewarded with gifts from the Asantehene. Such gifts varied: a stool with some subjects or slaves attached to it,[176] the right to sell or buy before other traders,[177] or part of a tax or tribute collected.[178]

To sum up, the Asante Kotoko depended on the Akyeame and the elders for national and local administration. These Akyeame were closely connected in their social origin with the members of the Asante Kotoko, who adjudicated major national disputes and formulated the policies to be followed. These Akyeame were recruited from prominent families that had migrated from Denkyera, or in Asantemanso. They were also recruited from Kumasi families that were already in

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[176] One Agyei, an ex-slave of the Omanhene of Akwamu state, was rewarded by Asantehene with an Okyeame stool, wives, slaves and gold. Bowdich, op. cit., p. 200. Other Akyeame got a part of the fees accruing from disputes they helped settle. See also Asante stool histories.

[177] For example, those trading for the Asantehene in northern markets had the right to sell their extra loads of kola nuts and buy what they needed before anyone else. Rattray, Ashanti Law . . ., op. cit., pp. 109-110. Tradition also given by Jamasihene and his elders.

[178] Often the gold dust tax collectors used a heavier unit scale than the one used to weight the dust before turning it over to the Sanahene. They kept the difference for their service. This custom was also found in Dahomey. Sometimes the collectors' commission was "two pereguins of ten" or twenty per cent of what they collected. Bowdich, op. cit., p. 206. For a description of these weights see Richard F. Burton and Verney L. Cameron, To Gold Coast for Gold: A Personal Narrative, London: Chatto & Windus, 1883, Vol. 2, pp. 154-155.

positions of power. As the expansion of Asante proceeded, new recruits were added as necessary, although by the end of Osei Bonsu's era most of the Akyeame stools were already established. The Akyeame were used at the capital in Kumasi as court officials. They were also used as liaison officers, messengers or ambassadors within the Amantuo region or with tributary states or Europeans on the coast. Their and the Abirempong's role in Anglo-Asante diplomacy in 1817 and 1820 provides an excellent example of the significance of these two institutions--Akyeame and Asante Kotoko--in the managing of Asante internal and external affairs. Thus when it was necessary for the Kotoko to assert its power over an undesirable Asantehene it did so, after deliberations in which the Akyeame's counsel on traditional customs and unwritten constitution and procedure was indispensable. An examination of these negotiations reveals the major economic and political considerations which determined war or peace for the nation, the degree of Asante flexibility in diplomacy as well as her ability to deal with her adversaries, especially during the turbulent interregna and other crises in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Finally, the decentralization system, which left most of the financial, administrative and military details to Abirempong or tributary states, and the well-defined

pattern of raising and distributing funds, enabled the Asante state to run smoothly without a large treasury or an elaborately centralized bureaucracy.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The social origin of the Asante administrators is closely connected with the origin of the Asante state. To understand where the Asante rulers came from after the confederacy was formed by Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye, one must examine the government that had previously existed among the small principalities or kingdoms that made up that confederacy. This is essential because it provides the ground rules or norms which delineated the procedure to be followed in recruiting officials, defined their functions, set limits on their power, and outlined the methods of controlling or removing them if they violated the unwritten constitution or civil codes. With the formulation of the confederacy most of these ground rules were retained and remained in effect at the local level. At the same time, the legitimacy of the new high officials' positions was based partly on existing norms and partly on modifications of those norms appropriate to the new situation. Thus, for instance, in the pre-confederacy period the petty state rulers were assisted in policy formulations by the elders, whose rank varied from extended household heads to lineage or clan heads. After the union formation the Asantehene performed similar functions, usually with the counsel and assis-

tance of elders whose rank varied from clan heads to heads of several clans having much larger territorial control.

Economic interests and early migrations influenced the recruiting of Asante rulers. In Chapter I we saw, for instance, that when Accanes trading interests on the coast were threatened, one Accanese merchant called Nimpha was chosen as the war leader, and at the conclusion of the war the Accanese influenced the selection of a friendly candidate as the new king of Fetu. Migrations that made it necessary to recruit leaders were undertaken by Asante groups that decided to leave Adanse and look for new settlements to the north, in Asantemanso and beyond. For example, Nana Gyame, Osei Tutu's uncle, led his group to Kokofu, while Nana Tutu Akoto led his splinter group to found Bekwai. The duties that these leaders and their advisors (or administrators) were expected to carry out were fairly standard as we learn from the accounts of contemporary conflicts: guarding group members' trading rights in the interior or the coast; regulating gold and related trade with the coast; mobilizing and coordinating the army in emergencies; negotiating with new allies; negotiating settlement rights as in the case of the Oyoko Amakom negotiation and settlement at Kumasi; and establishing friendly relationships with other areas through the exchange of embassies and gifts

or the payment of tribute (as was the case between Denkyera and Asante).

The institutional framework within which early Asante administrators performed the above duties resembled that of Akan institutions on the coast, as we can determine from an analysis of European coastal accounts in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A comparison of these institutions with the Asante institutions described in Asante oral traditions and in European travelers' accounts of Kumasi provides a better interpretation. The administrators in the coast did not constitute a group distinct from officials in related fields, such as the military, judicial or legislative. This meant that a person who performed what could be classified as a strictly administrative function, such as developing policy or coordinating the execution of policy by authorized officials, also performed other duties. He might be a general during wartime, or a judge during adjudication. What we today call bureaucratic functions were not then well-defined.

Furthermore, as family and kinship ties permeated other institutions, the administrators were often both public and family agents, mingling public and private duties in the course of a day's work. Hence, the elder who advised the king on policy formation was also the lobbyist for the interests of his family, lineage, or clan. The king assumed the dual

role of representing his own group and acting as the chief administrator who coordinated the functions of the administrators representing other segments of the society. The king and the elders were the source of collective power and authority in the kingdom. This power differed according to the size of the state: in a village or town with only an Odekuro or a low-ranking Ohene there was less political differentiation than in a large town or a state. Marriages provided an essential link between prominent families whose members held offices or occupied higher social positions, or furnished a bridge between these high-ranking families and low-ranking families whose members intermarried or practiced the ayete system.

The family influence was also important in other aspects of the government. The king, as the head of his group, was obligated to share power with his elders, and follow their counsel or be deposed. We have examples of this collective sharing of power in Chapter II, such as that of the Fante Braffo (or ruler) whose authority was restricted by his elders, or that of Anomabo, or Acron, where the elders could approve or veto the king's policies. The council of elders was in a position to exercise such control over the king because they had elected him to the office from among the eligible candidates of the royal family. They expected him to rule with their advice, and to

distribute goods and services equitably. Since each elder of the council represented the interests of his relatives, his interest in the fair distribution of wealth is apparent. The network of these elders--who owed their office partly to their social, political or economic prominence and partly to merit--together with their families, formed a ruling group from which most of the administrators entrusted with legislative, judicial and executive functions were chosen. They came to the palace regularly, met with the king, deliberated needed laws, heard criminal and civil cases or made policy decisions. Then they went back to their constituencies and transmitted the proceedings of the higher council to the lower council of elders. Always present in these councils were the Akyeame (linguists) for the king and the council. Also present in a subsidiary role were sword-bearers (messengers), criers (bailiffs), eunuchs (guards for the king's wives), treasurers, hornblowers (also king's traders), drummers and other court and household attendants. Their number varied according to the size of the kingdom.

The size of the states was very much dependent on economic institutional controls. If the state was to control the markets and the trade routes to those markets, it was essential to regulate the volume of trade according to the pressures of supply and demand (for example, the Fante withheld gold or slaves from

the coastal markets when there was only one ship at anchor--with several ships the prices were much higher), and to stop other powers from interrupting the flow of trade. Thus Fante states, Denkyera, Akwamu, and prominent merchants like John Kabe and John Konny succeeded as they did because they exerted strong economic control in their areas. Likewise, most of the interstate (or international) wars in the region, whether between African states themselves or between African states and Europeans, were centered on economics. A good example for the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries would be Denkyera's wars to prevent the secession of her heavily taxed seaward tributary states, which would have choked off that land-locked nation economically. A related example would be Denkyera's increased demand for gold from Asante to finance these wars, and Asante's refusal to pay. Finally, the Asante took advantage of Denkyera's economic problems not only to secede, but also to gain control of the rich trade routes passing through Asante to the north and south.

But it was not enough for the Asante to liberate themselves from Denkyera and take control of their own economic institutions. Since this feat was accomplished by a newly unified state, our analysis of the origins of the Asante administrators, and of the officials recruited to fill older or newly created

positions, leads us to hypothesize that the development of the Asante state was aided by marital relationships which created strong kinship ties. These ties furthered and protected diverse and sometimes conflicting kinship interests. As was pointed out in Chapter III, kinship ties were very important in determining the assistance rendered between villages, towns and other political units, determining the political status of these units, and determining appointments and election to offices. Some noteworthy instances are the marriages between Osei Tutu's family and Amakom, on the one hand, and those between Osei himself and Mampong family, on the other. These marriages created a close alliance between the respective groups, and members of these families were appointed to high administrative positions in Asante government. An analysis of the kinship ties of high Asante administrators (who were also military leaders) during the Denkyera war led us to conclude that they were all interrelated, either as affines or as kinsmen, with two exceptions, Ejisuhene and Tafohene.

These kinship relationships, which had so successfully integrated the Asante during the Denkyera war, formed the basis for the Asante expansion and mutual dependence during the difficult reigns of Osei Tutu and his successor, Opoku Ware I. At the same time, family connections through ayete systems were

established, while the old ties were refined and strengthened with new marriages between high office-holding families. Since endo-clan marriages (within Oyoko, Aduana or Ɛeretuo, for example) were forbidden, exo-clan unions became the norm. Thus the Oyoko clan royal lineages, who ruled the Amantuo of Kumasi, Juaben, Kokofu, Nsuta and Bekwai, married from either Aduana lineages, who ruled Kumawu and Asumegya Amantuo, or from Beretuo families in Offinsu and Mampong Amantuo. Preferred cross-cousin marriage (between father's sons and father's sister's daughters only) facilitated the strengthening of these marital ties. A study of the elaborate ayete system indicates that it was aimed at increasing political, social, and economic integration in Asante society by ensuring that the new administrators were recruited primarily from the sons, nephews, grandsons or grandnephews of current or past administrators. Queen mothers, who were also influential, were similarly recruited. This is well illustrated by the marriages of Mamponghene Safo Kantanka and the role his family web played in the enstoolment of his son Osei Kwame as Asantehene. Other examples are the three cases discussed on intra-Amantuo ayete in Kumasi (Manwere, Akwamu, and Nkwantakesie); the Apaahene's in-laws, who were also his major advisors and kingmakers; and Mamponghene's kinship relationship with the five most important

stools and kingmakers in that oman. A study of the ayete system also leads us to conclude that most of the influential officials in the Asante political arena from Odekuro to Asantehene were freemen.

Since all officials in Asante occupy stools of various kinds, our investigation of the founding of these stools, their occupants and their incorporation into Asante society leads us to make the following observations. First, that most of the influential family (abosuadwa) positions in Kumasi today trace their origin to the families who migrated to Kumasi from Adanse, Denkyera or Akim, an area twenty five miles south of Kumasi, before the Denkyera war or within a decade thereafter. Second, that the heads of the stools were Abosua Panin, Adekuro, and Ahene, but rarely Abirempong, to their political units in their former homelands. Third, that although those societies who were in Kumasi before the Denkyera war were incorporated through various pressures and political tactics, ultimately the stools were left to the original abosua. Fourth, Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye strengthened and provided new bonds for political alliances begun by their predecessors, Nananom Oti Akenten and Obiri Yeboa. Sixth, that these alliances were based on kinship ties or on mutual dependence, which strengthened the loose bonds between unrelated groups who joined together against external enemies.

Seventh, that the migrating groups were readily incorporated into Asante politics and allowed to retain their administrative position because Kumasi was a new frontier with plenty of land for new settlers, a relatively greater degree of freedom compared to Denkyera, and job opportunities for administrators and skilled craftsmen (e.g. chief goldsmith).

An analysis of the detailed traditions dealing with other non-abosuadwa stools created by Osei Tutu and his successors such as ahenemmadwa, esomdwa and adehyemmadwa, offers several interesting inferences. The esomdwa stools were of the lowest rank and did not have any significant political or administrative influence. Power, authority and family rights exercised by adehyemmadwa stools were almost identical to those exercised by abosuadwa stools. The creation of ahenemmadwa stools resulted from the monarch's attempt to achieve greater administrative control--which was, however, neutralized by the power the other stools wielded in major council meetings. Once the stools were created (except for esomdwa and to some extent ahenemmadwa) the norm was the institutionalization of the original occupant's family as rightful heirs to the stool. The family rights to the stool, as reckoned through tradition, encouraged greater independence from monarchical pressures and control, even when the original occupants were clearly "servants." Because

the intricate family rights restricted the stool power and the tradition sanctioned this process, the Asantehene could never pack the Asante Kotoko or other major policy-making bodies with his cronies. Finally, the new stools were created in response to the increased need for administrative personnel in an expanding Asante state.

There was also an increased need for the Akyeame, who played an indispensable role in internal and external affairs, both with neighboring and tributary states and with the European merchants and governors on the coast. Traditions concerning the origin and development of Akyeame stools reveal that, depending on the particular stool classification, they had the same characteristics as other abosuadwa, adehyemmadwa, ahenemmadwa or esomdwa stools. An additional unique characteristic of these stools is that they required high oratorical and diplomatic talents. These talents rank prominently in many Akyeame traditions of origin.

A final examination of the interaction of these Akyeame and Mpanyimfuo--of all ranks, including household heads, Adekuro, Ahene, Abirempong, Amantuohene, and Asantehene and at all levels, including villages, towns, kingdoms, or the entire Asante nation--indicates that these people were the administrators of Asante. The Akyeame were used as spokesmen at the courts

during meetings of the council of elders convened for adjudicating cases, negotiating, debating or formulating local or national policies. Every litigant addressed the council and the king through the Akyeame, while the king and council members' views were likewise conveyed to litigants through the same channel. At court the Akyeame also acted as counsel to the defendants, plaintiffs, or the entire council on Asante law and traditions. The Okyeame was an impartial official who helped determine when laws had been violated and who participated in the censure--even if the censure meant dethroning the king.

Outside the court the Akyeame were used as messengers or ambassadors for the king or the council, within Asante or with neighboring states. When they performed these functions, the Akyeame were accompanied by a delegation of council members who acted as advisors. Major delegations were led by a council member of higher rank than the Okyeame. The latter's duty was then mainly to act as spokesman for, and counsel to, the entire delegation. Examples are the 1881 mission during the "gold axe" affair led by Boakye Tenten or the 1894-95 Asante embassy led by Prince John Owusu Ansah. Akyeame also accompanied the army as negotiators or political agents. Their mission in these situations was to avert war by negotiating for peace or for payment of war indemnity or tribute along pre-

determined policy guidelines. Before any war broke out between Asante and her tributaries or other states, the Akyeame were normally sent out to effect settlement and avert needless bloodshed--the case of Osei Bonsu and his tributaries in Assin, Fante and Gyaman early in the nineteenth century readily comes to mind. Equally important was the Akyeame's role in trying to persuade the Juaben people to return to Kumasi twice in the same century. Thus the Akyeame and Mpanyimfuo worked together with the king for the welfare of all the units that they represented in Asante, whether that welfare was confined within Asante or involved neighboring regions as well.

As we turn to an overview of the entire Asante state and her administrative developments, we must once more consider Asante's complex organization centering around the extended family and kinship-related interests. Whether or not we choose to accept what is widely accepted by Asante ruling aristocracy--that the Golden Stool was sent by God from heaven--we cannot neglect the importance of this unifying political emblem. However, two interesting factors are revealed by oral traditions: first, that Okomfo Anokye, who invoked the Golden Stool, and Osei Tutu, whom God designated as its first occupant, were related by marriage, and second, that their predecessors held the two highest political positions in the old Kumasi

state. The new symbol legitimized their positions in the new Asante political order. When Okomfo Anokye ordered all the Ahene of Asante principalities to bury their old stools and have them replaced with new ones, he also decreed that the Asante national spirit was embodied in the new Golden Stool, and that these Ahene and their successors owed their allegiance to the occupants of this stool. The new Asante union, having greater resources and manpower, was now to protect and further interests which until then had been handled locally. Family interests, then, became national interests.

The administration of the new nation was only partially centralized. The administrative policies affecting the entire Asante state were the responsibility of the Asante national assembly (Asanteman or Asante Kotoko), but each Omantuo basically controlled its local administration. New stools were also created at the local level for relatives of existing stool holders, or, rarely, for servants. As Asante expanded and conquered new territories, the administration of this area, too, was entrusted to various Amantuo rulers who chose among their relatives the residents to be stationed in those territories. If the war captives were brought back to Kumasi and divided among various Amantuo and Abirempong, these latter chose where they were to be settled and appointed Adekuro or Ahene for

the new settlements. Traditions of various Abirempong abound with accounts of such settlements in Brong Ahafo or in Asante (including a well-known section of greater Kumasi). The rulers of such settlements were also members of the ruling local councils of elders. For distant areas the residents carried out the Obirempong's (and hence Asanteman's) policies with the help of the indigenous rulers. Such residents informed the Obirempong of anything serious. In case of rebellion the Obirempong handled the situation first and sought the Asanteman's help as a last resort.

But the Asante did not have a bureaucracy centralized at the capital, Kumasi, and performing strictly administrative functions. Such a bureaucracy would have well-defined codes or administrative regulations, specified hierarchies of authority, separation of public and private duties, trained specialists, and full-time officials. What Asante had instead were officials who owed their positions to local electors with family connections. These family connections were most important, as our analysis shows. At the national and local levels almost every individual who occupied an important stool, i.e. a stool of Mpomponsuo rank, was related to the other office holders through a kinship web. He owed his position partly to this web and partly to his own merit. This is illustrated particularly by the oral traditions and written accounts

dealing with prominent officials in Asante history, such as the negotiators of the many Anglo-Asante treaties and agreements in the nineteenth century. Examples include Prince Adum (Asantehene's nephew and ambassador to Cape Coast in 1820, with his suite of 500 advisors and attendants); Boakye Tenten (Asantehemaa's husband and step-father to Asantehene Mensa Bonsu, and his embassy with many Abirempong representatives); Prince John Owusu Ansah (Asantehene's grandson and leader of the Asante Embassy to England in 1894-95). Equally important is the background of the Asanteman council members who negotiated treaties with Huydecoper, Bowdich and Dupuis, who debated war policies and the release of Ramseyer and Kuhne in 1873, and who ratified the Fomena Treaty and were exiled with Prempeh and Yaa Asantewa.

These officials do not constitute a "pure bureaucracy" because they were not appointed to their positions by a superior authority. On the contrary, they themselves--or most of them--constituted the superior authority in the nation--the Asante Kotoko. They had the power to elect or depose the Asantehene. They were self-sufficient in their local constituencies, having the right to equip and raise armies, to trade independently in the coastal or northern markets, and to raise revenue needed by the Asantehene to pay national debts and other expenses. It was also their

responsibility to come to Kumasi personally or to send representatives whenever the national interests required it. Yet none of these officials had the right to do as he personally liked without consulting with his electors (the heads of lineages or clans) to whom he owed his office.

The significant role played by the family and kinship-related members of the Asante administration suggests that the Asante confederacy was ruled by a complex super-family government. Paradoxically, such a government was both weak and strong. On one hand, it lacked a centralized and well-coordinated strictly administrative machinery, which would have been invaluable during turbulent interregna. Such an administration would have held the empire together while various factions within Asanteman disputed and sometimes took up arms to put their respective candidates on the throne. On the other hand, the Asantefuo or Asante national spirit embodied in the Golden Stool and the kinship ties exercised a strong unifying hold over the people. In times of crisis the Kotoko members recalled the implications of the Golden Stool, its history and their own blood or marital ties. They also took into consideration their national and economic interests. Finally, they chose the new Asantehene. This was not always an easy task--once it was only accomplished after three years of bitter civil war. With the new

ruler on the throne, the next target was to send ambassadors and armies to suppress revolts in areas where the kinship ties did not exist. That these cycles lasted for two hundred years during which the confederacy thrived is a tribute to the underlying strength of the Asante kinship system.

What is the use of such a study as this? The answer is simply that this kind of study is essential if we are to pinpoint the groups from which the Asante state recruited her administrators. This study also suggests the kind of research that could be done on similar topics in other African areas where complex states existed. From what social group, for example, did the other centralized West African states like Dahomey, Benin and old Oyo recruit their administrators? While evidence might be difficult to obtain for Oyo, it might be easier for Dahomey and Benin. The historian should attempt to retrieve traditions on office-holding families in these states to determine how "absolute" the monarch was. In Eastern Africa one might investigate the pre-colonial governments of Buganda, Bunyoro, Ethiopia, Ndebele, and Merina. Several such studies should eventually enable us to pinpoint the degree of stratification in the society, checks and balances used to maintain political equilibrium, the level of upward mobility, and the role of economic factors in all these states, and then draw

some valid generalizations.

Finally, one might pose a question: To what degree did the old political order change in terms of its administrative recruitment in the colonial period and later in the independent era? And is there any discernable relationship between the descendants of the traditional and modern administrators which could help us understand contemporary African ethnic alignments and administrative problems?

APPENDIX I

GLOSSARY

This glossary does not constitute a dictionary; it is intended for helping the reader only.

Abosuani--a family member.

Abosua Panin--elder who is the head of a nuclear or extended household.

Accanes--(also called Arkany, Hacanys, Accanez, Arkanis) a group of Akan speakers who were trading on the Gold Coast as early as 1500. They came mainly from Adanse in the Pra-Ofin confluence.

Adanse--one of the Akan groups; the area where the Asante people migrated from.

Adehyiedwa--stools occupied by individuals who trace descent on the matrilineal line.

Adehyiemmadwa--stools occupied by specified brothers, sons and grandsons of a previous stool occupant.

Aduana--one of the Akan clans.

Afanaa--a female slave.

Agona--a town in Asante in which lives the Agona clan, the clan of Okomfo Anokye.

Ahenemma--king's sons.

Ahenkwa (pl. Nhenkwa)--servant of the king.

Ahenkwadwa (Nhenkwadwa)--same as Esomdwa stool.

Ahwehweba--the second ranking sword used by low-ranking Ahene or Adekuro or elders to take oath of allegiance.

Akan--one of the Kwa languages or a speaker (speakers) of that language. The group is comprised of Asante, Akuapem, Fante, Akyem, Denkyera, Assini, Kwawu, Akwamu, Bono (Brong).

Akoa--subject; commoner; servant.

Akonua--stool; throne.

Akonuanipa--stool subject or servant.

Akuona--one of the Akan clans.

Akwasidae--a special Wednesday when certain rituals and ceremonies were performed.

Akwansrafo--scouts; spies; border guards.

Al-Hajj--a person who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Asante--the country inhabited by the Asante people; the political area ruled by the Asante.

Asantemanso--an area south of Kumasi which some traditions indicate is the homeland of the Asante people; an area where the Asante states met before their northward migration.

Asafo--a company or division of men in a township or country often holding police or military functions.

Asine--one of the Akan clans.

Asiwa--ayete wife

Asona--one of the Akan clans.

Atumtumtufuo--the Asantehene's guards armed with blunderbusses.

Ayete--a relationship established by marriage between two families with complex reciprocal duties and obligations from each set of in-laws.

Bantama--a section of Kumasi ruled by the Bantamahene who is the vice-president of Kumasi Traditional Council and the most powerful official next to the Asantehene.

Barema--a male royal descendant of any Abosuadwa stool connected with stool lineage matrilineally.

Beretuo--one of the Akan clans, from which the king of Mampong comes.

Birempong--(also Berempong, Brempong) head chief who occupies one of the constituent kingdoms of Asante or a subdivision within one of these kingdoms.

Bosom--lesser god; guardian spirit.

Caboceer--a word for Ohene, derived from Portuguese caboceiro, which means commander or chief.

Denkyera--one of the Akan groups; former overlord of Asante.

Domkwa--a doyere wife or non-ayete wife. Generally a wife married by a non-stool occupant.

Doyere--a wife married outside of ayete custom; same as odokwa or domkwa.

Durbar--a state procession.

Ejisu--one of the Akan states, of which Yaa Asantewa was the queen mother.

Esomdwa--service stool, generally occupied by candidates appointed by the king on the basis of merit (see Osomadwuma).

Fekufuo--people of the same fekuo; electors.

Fekuo--group, company, or association of individuals (often of non-related members).

Fetish--oath; amulets, charms, or other objects believed to bring protection to the wearer; shrine for ancestral or spiritual worship.

Fienipa--stool subject or member of an extended household.

Fotuosanfohene--the head keeper of the leather bag containing weights used for weighing gold dust.

Japatia--the lowest sword used for swearing oath of allegiance by elders and servants.

Juaben--one of the Asante states (amantuo).

Katakyire--brave; courageous.

Kese (Kesie)--big; important.

Kra--soul.

Kradwarefuo--plural of Kradwareni.

Kradwareni--soul washer; a person who performs ritual

ceremonies on specified days for the king.

Kramor (Kramo)--an Asante name for Muslim.

Kumasihene--the king of Kumasi before the formation of the Asante confederacy. The Asantehene plays a dual role--one as Kumasihene (President) in Kumasi state, with Bantamahene as the Vice-President; and the other as the king of the entire Asante nation, with Mamponghene as the Vice-President.

Kumawu--one of the Asante states.

Kyeame (Okyeame)-- (pl. Akyeame) linguist, spokesman in Akan courts.

Mampong--the second most important constituent kingdom in the Asante confederacy.

Mamponghemaa--the queen mother of Mampong

Mamponghene--the king of Mampong.

Mancheros--same as Nkwankwaa.

Manhyia--Asantehene's palace; area in Kumasi adjacent to this palace.

Mpanyimfuo--plural of Panin, Opanin.

Mpomponsuo--the sword forged and first used by Asantehene Opoku Ware I, which is used now by the high ranking Ahene for swearing the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene during enstoolment.

Mrantie--young men; commoners or free people.

Nifahene--the commander of the right wing of the army.

Nhenkwa--king's servants (see Ahenkwa).

Nkwankwaa--a company or group of young men who sometimes act as police.

Nkwankwahene--chief or king-elect who has not taken the oath of allegiance; leader of the Nkwankwaa.

Nsuta--one of the Asante states.

Ntam Kesie--the great oath of Asante which refers to the day and place where Osei Tutu was killed.

Nyame--God.

Obaa Panin--female counterpart of Abosua Panin.

Obadiakyire--heir apparent.

Odehyie--(also Odehye; pl. Adehyie, Adehye) a member of the royal family who is eligible for succession to the stool.

Odekuro--(pl. Adekuro) village headman.

Ohemaa--queen mother

Ohene--king, head ruler; also used nowadays for chief or paramount chief. When used in a compound, O- is dropped, e.g. Asante + Ohene = Asantehene or the king of Asante, Akyeame + Ohene = Akyeamehene or the head linguist.

Oheneba--the son of a king who is generally not eligible to occupy the abosuadwa stool.

Ohenemaa--same as Ohemaa; when used in a compound, O-is dropped, e.g. Asante + ohemaa = Asantehemaa or the queen mother of Asante, Mampong + ohemaa = Mamponghemaa or the queen mother of Mampong.

Ohenemmadwa--(pl. Ahenemmadwa) stool mainly occupied by sons or grandsons of the king with ayete wives.

Ohene Mpanyimfuo--king's elders who form the council of elders which legislates and adjudicates cases.

Ohenenana--grandchild of the king.

Okomfo--priest.

Okomfo Anokye--the supreme lawgiver of Asante; Priest Anokye.

Oman--nation or state, generally ruled by an Obirempong, Omanhene, or Omantuohene.

Omanhene--the king or ruler of an oman.

Omantuo--(pl. Amantuo) same as oman, e.g. Juaben, Mampong, etc.

Opanin (also Panin)--elder

Osomadwuma--service, duty or office performed for the Ohene.

Otumfuo--the Asantehene's official title, as His Majesty.

Oyoko--one of the clans of Asante, from which the Asantehene comes.

Saman--ghost or spirit of a deceased person.

Sanaa--royal treasury; craftsmanship.

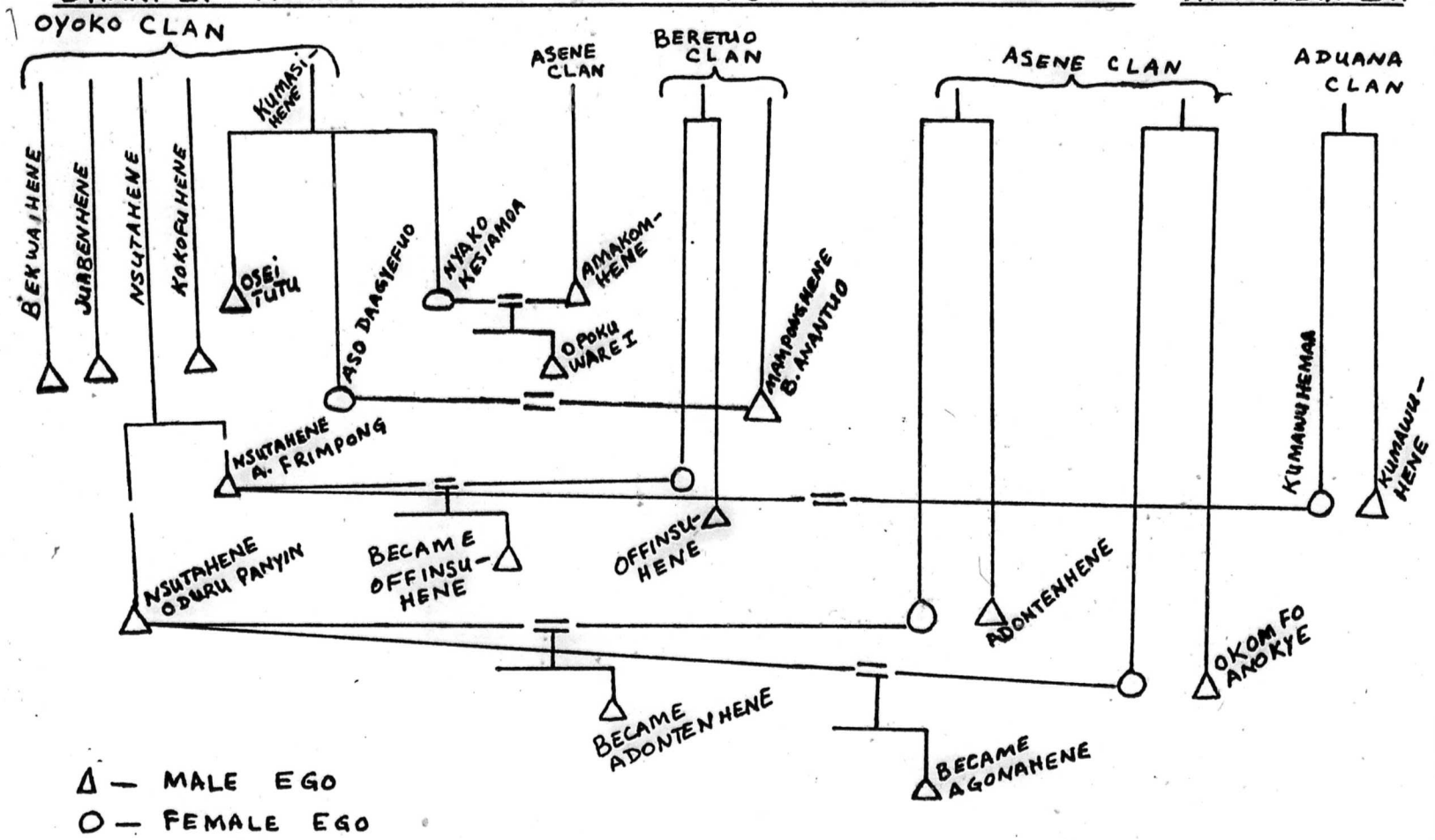
Sanaahene--the person in charge of gold weights used for weighing gold dust currency; treasurer.

Sikadwa--the Golden Stool of Asante.

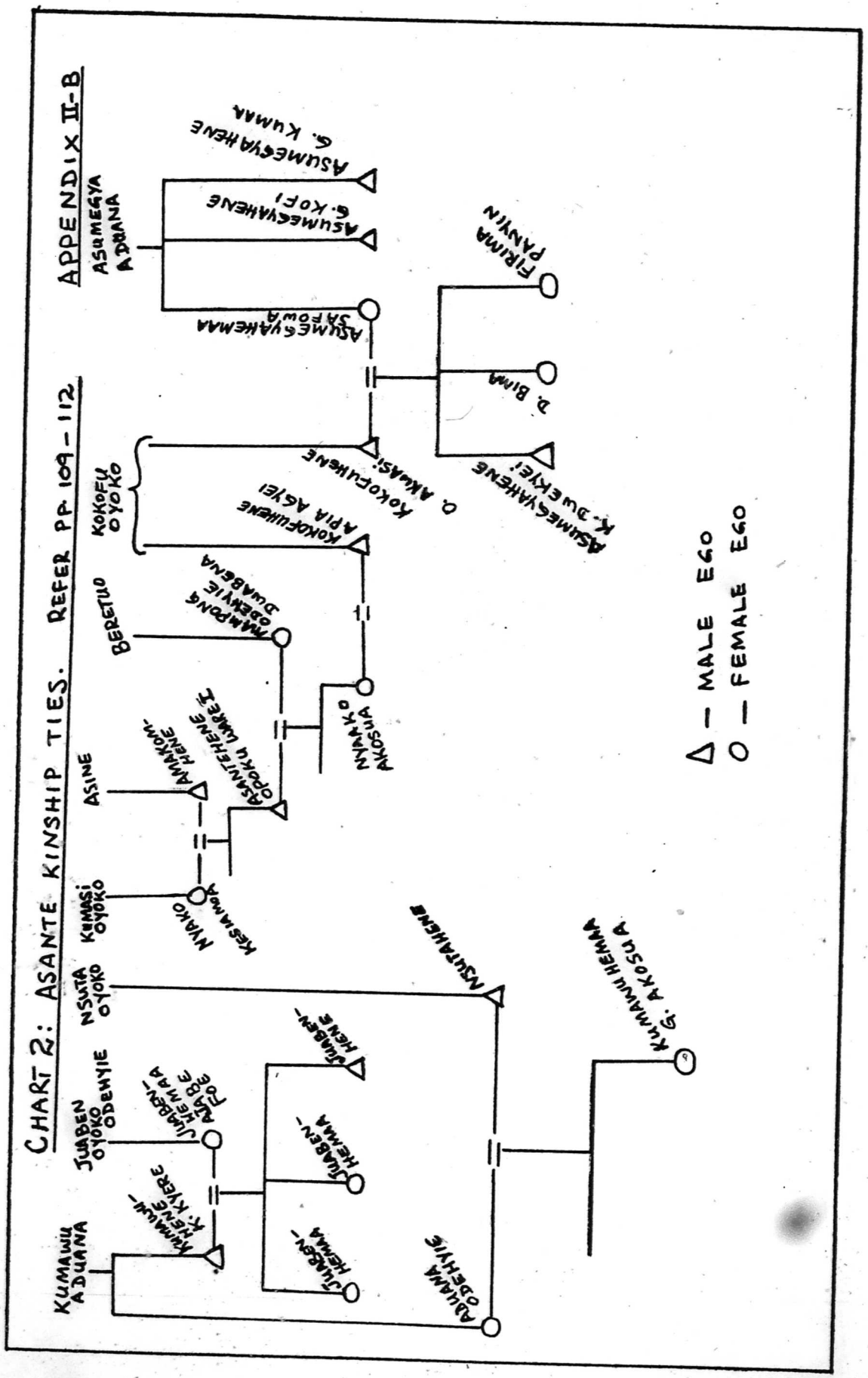
Stool--a carved wooden or gilded seat (throne); office.

Wiremfuo--bodyguards; kingmakers. Guardians of the stool regalia after the death of the king until the new king is enstooled.

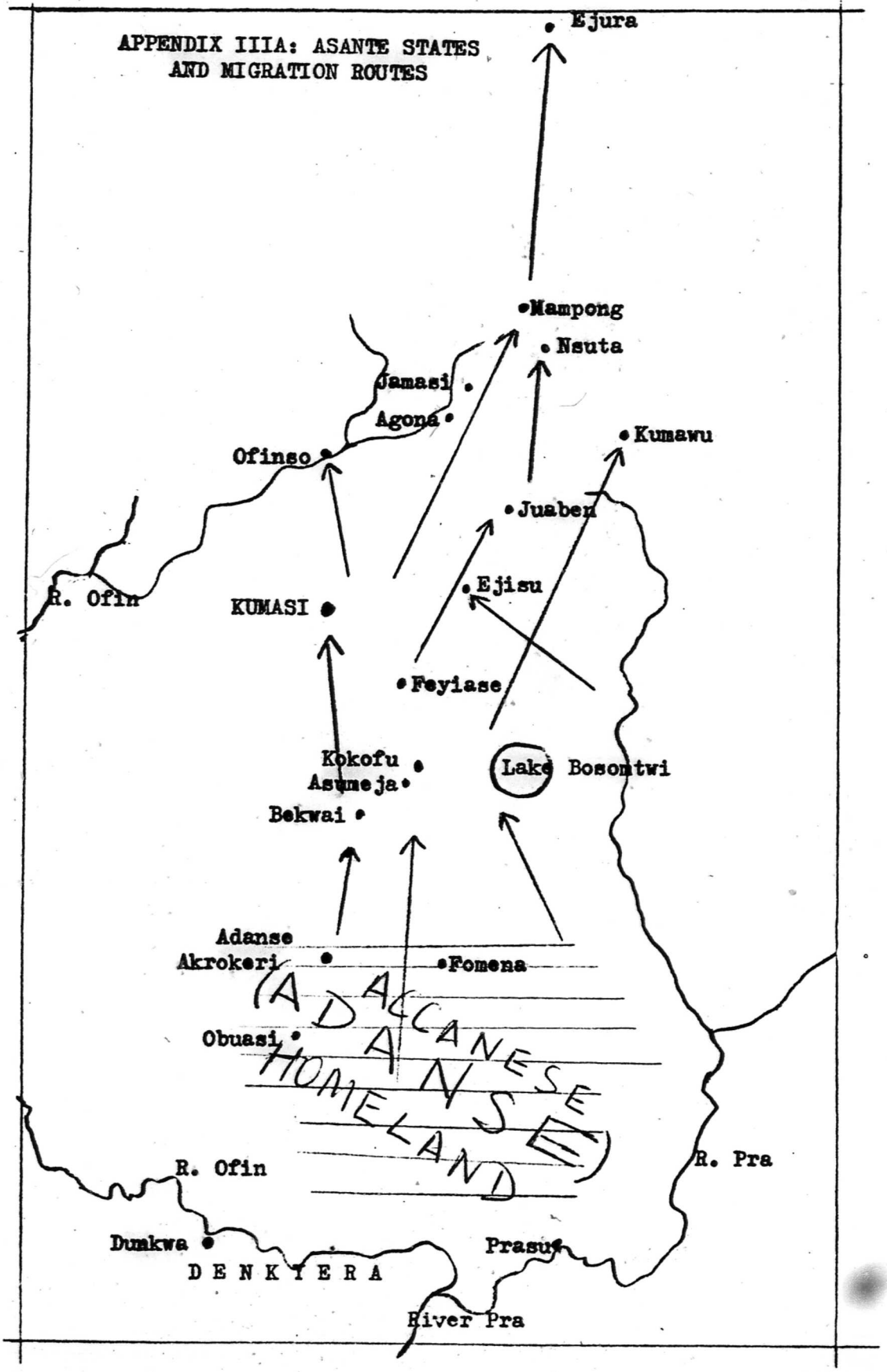
CHART 1: ASANTE KINSHIP TIES C. 1700. REFER PP. 98-101 APPENDIX II-A

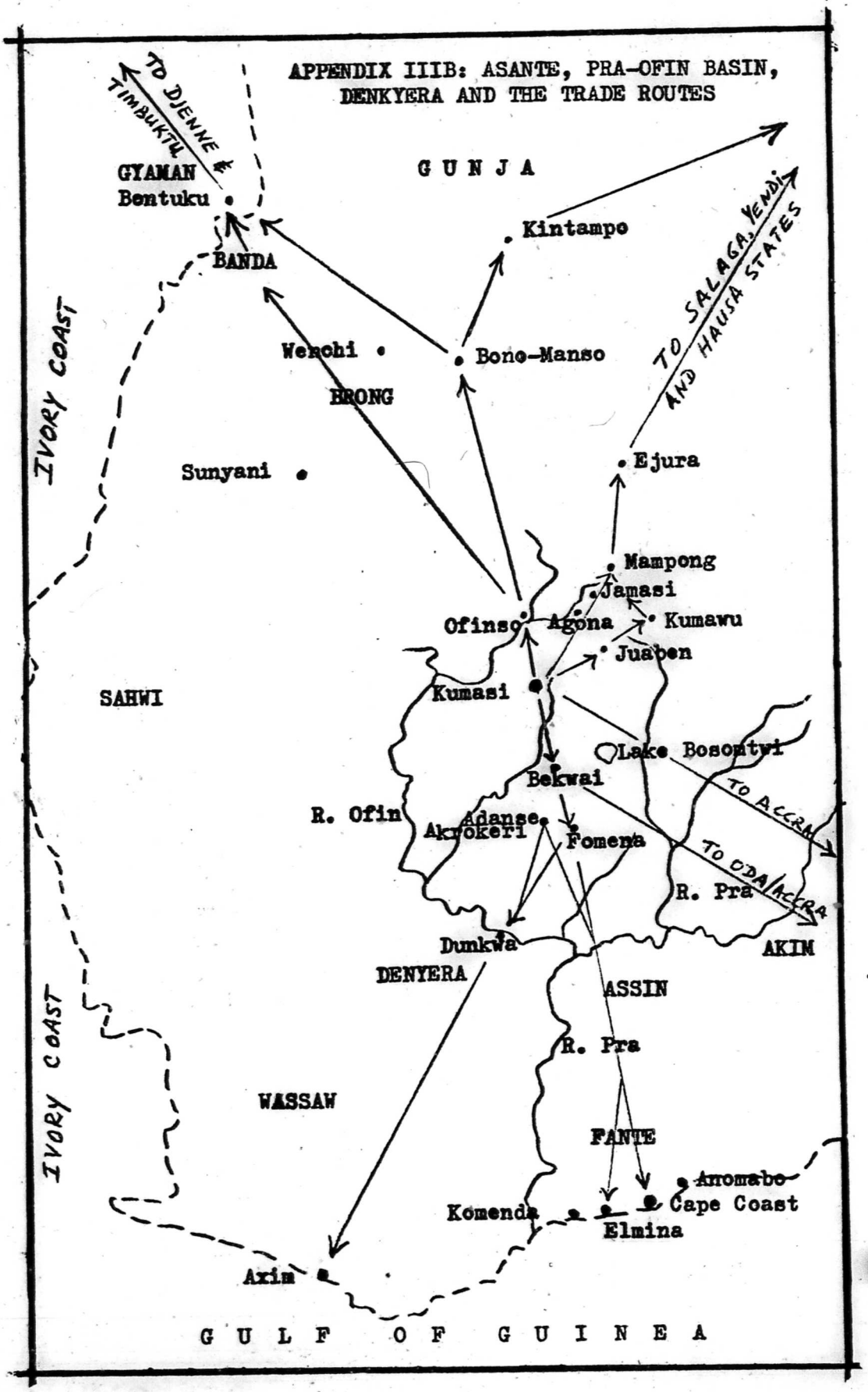


* NSUTAHENE A. FRIMPONG AND ODURU PANYIN WERE NOT BROTHERS BUT SECOND COUSINS


APPENDIX II-B
CHART 2: ASANTE KINSHIP TIES. REFER PP 109-112
△ — MALE EGO
○ — FEMALE EGO
ASUMEGYA ADUANA
ASUMEGYAHENE G. KOFI
ASUMEGYAHENE G. KUMAA
ASUMEGYAHEMAA SAFOUA
FIRIMA PANYIN
D. BIMA
ASUMEGYAHENE K. DUEKYEI
KOKOFUHENE OYOKO
KOKOFUHENE APIA ASYEI
O. AKWASI
BERETUO
MMAMPONA ODENYIE DUABENA
AKOSUA NYAKO
ASINE
AMAKOM-HENE
ASANTEHENE OPOKU WARE I
NYAKO
KUMASI OYOKO
KESIAMA
NSUTA OYOKO
NSUTAHENE
KUMAWU HEMAA G. AKOSUA
JUABEN OYOKO ODEWYIE
JUABEN-HEMAA
JUABEN-HENE
ADUANA ODEHYIE
KUMAWU-HENE K. KYERE
JUABEN-HEMAA
JUABEN-HENE
KUMAWU ADUANA

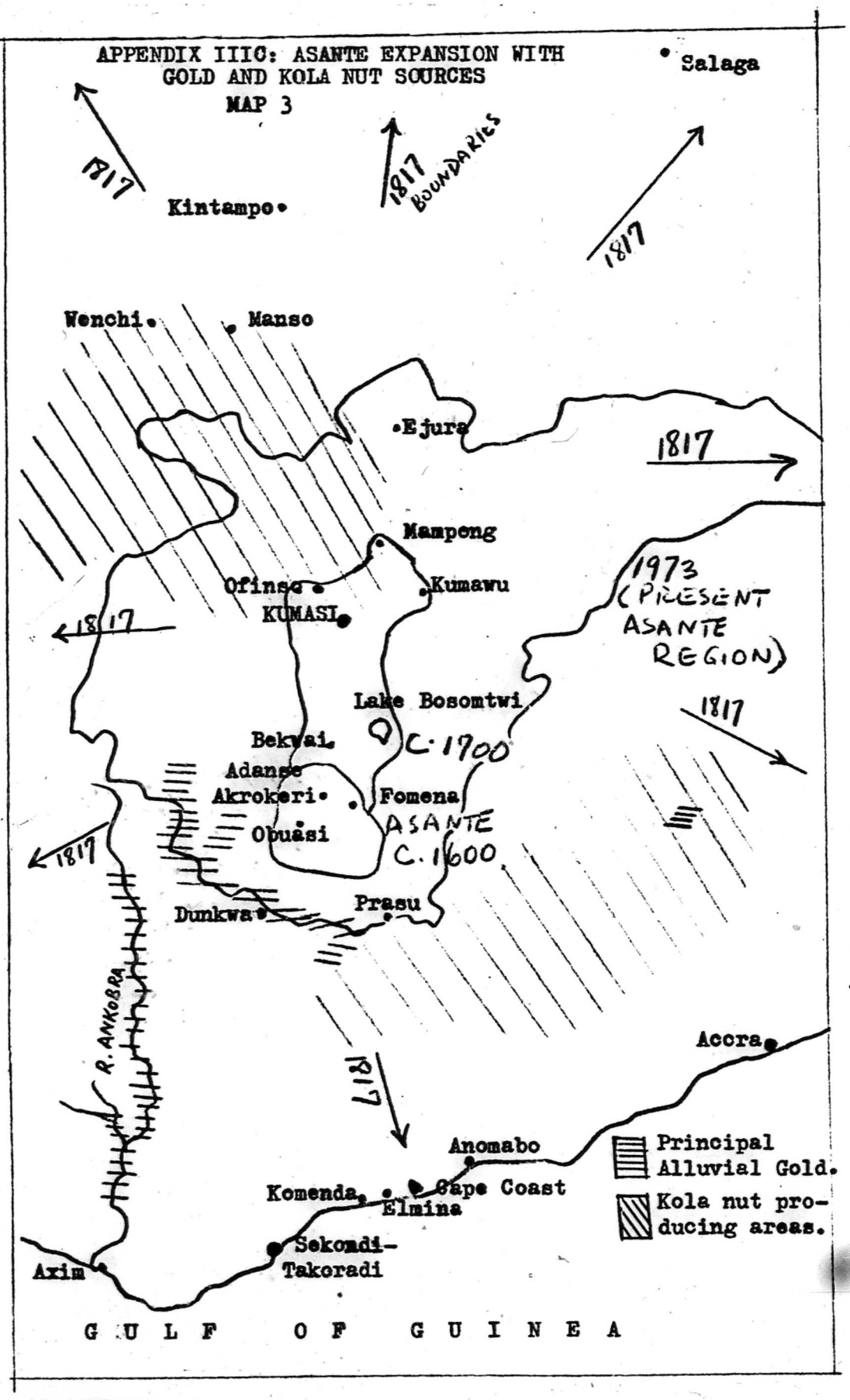
APPENDIX IIIA: ASANTE STATES AND MIGRATION ROUTES




APPENDIX IIIB: ASANTE, PRA-OFIN BASIN, DENKYERA AND THE TRADE ROUTES
TO DJENNE
TIMBUKTU
GYAMAN
Bentuku
BANDA
GUNJA
Kintampo
TO SALAGA, YENDI AND HAUSA STATES
IVORY COAST
Wenchi
Bono-Manso
BRONG
Sunyani
Ejura
Mampong
Jamasi
Ofinso
Agona
Kumawu
Juaben
Kumasi
SAHWI
Lake Bosomtwi
Bekwai
TO ACCRA
R. Ofin
Adansi
Akrokeri
Fomena
TO ODA/ACCRA
R. Pra
Dumkwa
AKIM
DENYERA
ASSIN
R. Pra
WASSAW
FANTE
Apomabo
Komenda
Cape Coast
Elmina
Axim
GULF OF GUINEA

APPENDIX IIIC: ASANTE EXPANSION WITH GOLD AND KOLA NUT SOURCES

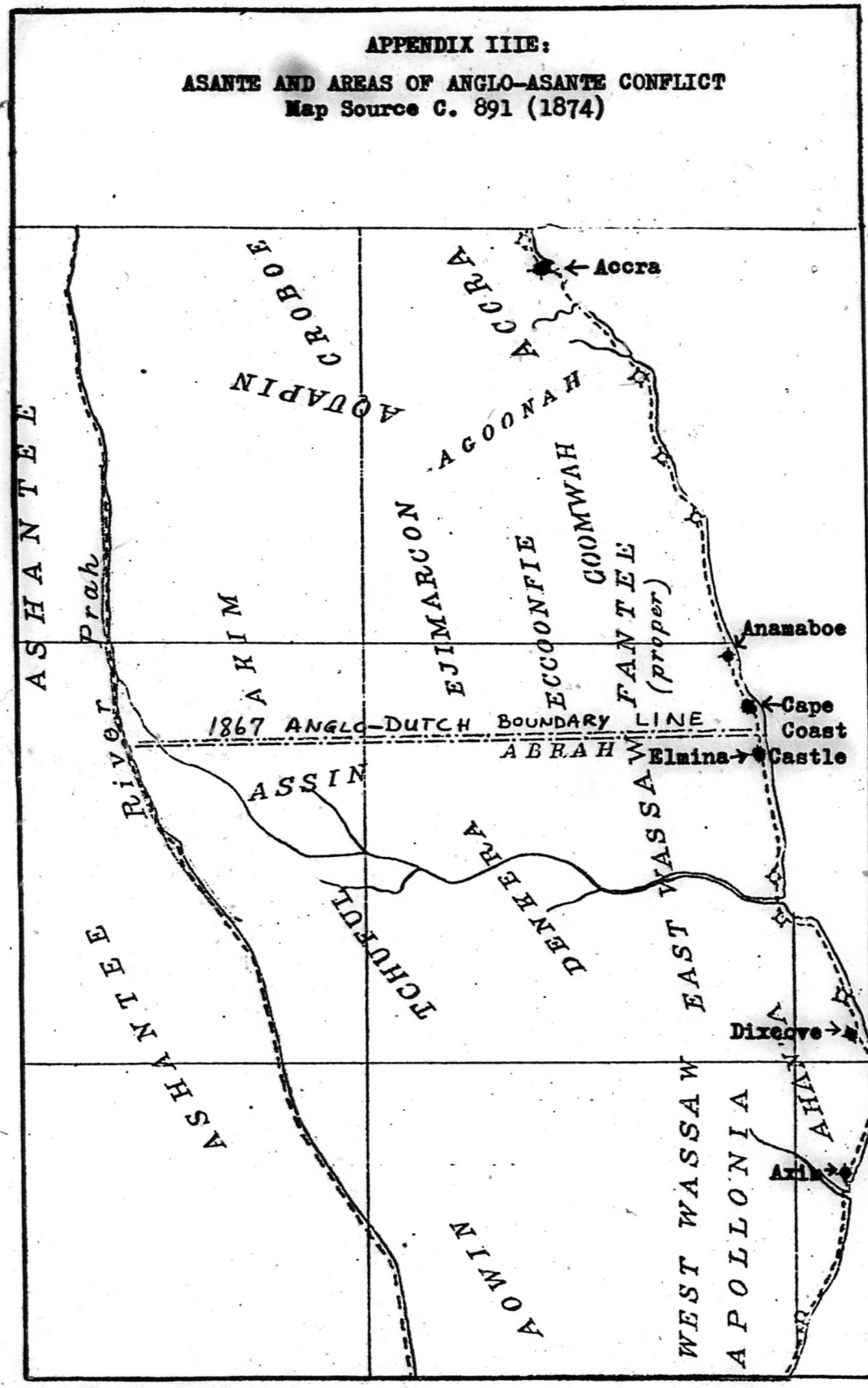
MAP 3



APPENDIX IIID: ASANTE AND HER TRIBUTARIES
John Arrowsmith's Map in C. 551-II (1842)

APPENDIX IIIE:

ASANTE AND AREAS OF ANGLO-ASANTE CONFLICT
Map Source C. 891 (1874)



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II. Select Committee on West African Settlements Part II: Appendix and Index.

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C. 456 (1855), Fanti-Ashanti Warfare; Further papers.

C. 385 (1864), Ashanti War. Despatches explaining the Cause of the War with Directions and Returns.

C. 393 (1864), Cape Coast Command. Military returns.

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C. 412 (1865), Report of the Select Committee on British Establishments on Western Coast of Africa.

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C. 266 (1873), Ashanti Invasion. See also the following Command Papers on the topic: C. 801 (1873); C. 802 (1873); C. 804 (1873); C. 819 (1873); C. 274 (1874); C. 890 (1874); C. 891 (1874); C. 892 (1874);

C. 893 (1874); C. 894 (1874); C. 907 (1874); C. 921 (1874); C. 922 (1874); C. 962 (1874); C. 1006 (1874).

C. 941 (1874), British Possessions/Trade Return of Revenue Imports etc. of Settlements and Comparative Statement of British Trade with West Africa (1853-72).

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C. 3386 (1882), Gold Coast. Further correspondence.

C. 3687 (1883), Further Correspondence relating to Affairs of the Gold Coast.

C. 1052 (1884), Further correspondence relating to Affairs of Gold Coast.

C. 4052 (1884), Ashanti kingship/British policy. Further Gold Coast correspondence.

C. 4477 (1884-5), Ashanti kingship/Lagos. Further Gold Coast correspondence.

C. 4906 (1886), Ashanti coronation/ Trade routes. Further correspondence.

C. 5357 (1888), Commercial concern/Tribal warfare. Further Gold Coast correspondence.

C. 5615 (1888), Ashanti Affairs. Further Gold Coast correspondence.

C. 7917 (1896), Ashanti Affairs. Further correspondence.

C. 7918 (1896), Further correspondence relating to the Ashanti Affairs.

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Native political affairs: ADM 1/9/2, ADM 1/9/4, ADM 1/9/5.

Official correspondence within Gold Coast and Reports of Travelling officials: ADM 1/2/374, ADM 11/1482, ADM 11/1483, ADM 1/794, ADM 11/1733, ADM 5/3/8, ADM 11/1728.

Confidential Minute Papers: Accession numbers 2312, 2964, 1259, 2181, ADM 4/1/109.

2. Ghana National Archives, Kumasi

These sources were classified under various categories, e.g. Tribal Histories W 91/23; Divisional constitution EP 129/1926; Confidential diaries C 11/18, C 2/1916; Traditional Histories of Divisions EP 76/1926; Destoolment and Installation of Chiefs, Land and Stool Disputes.

3. Asante Traditional Archives. Asantehene's Archives, MANHYIA, KUMASI.

This is the temporary depository of all of Asantehene's official documents: Correspondence with other Ahene; Records of the proceedings of Kumasi Traditional Council; Prempeh I's important letters, some of them written while he was still in exile in Seychelles Islands; and the Asante Stool Histories.

Asante Stool Histories:*

Abenasi, 96.

Aboabogya, 121.

Aboaso, 160.

Abuantem, 72.

Adankraja, 153.

Adanse Paramount, 89.

Adonten, 95.

Adubinso-Kyere, 139.

Adum, 5.

Adwasi, 88.

Agogo, 62.

Agyaako-Kwado, 183.

Ahenkro, 137.

Ahensan, 164.

*All the stool histories are denoted by IAS/AS (Institute of African Studies/Asante Stools). To avoid unnecessary repetition, only the stool name and number will be given below, e.g. Abenasi Stool History, IAS/AS 96 will appear as Abenasi, 96.

Ahubrafuo, 143.

Ahwerewam, 140.

Akankade, 75.

Akokofe, 151.

Akumaten, 80.

Akwaboa, 17.

Akwamu, 38.

Akyaw-Krom, 8.

Akyebiakyere, 84.

Akyempim, 106.

Akyiase, 67.

Akyiniyie-Kyemfo, 181.

Amakom, 77.

Amakye-Bari, 175.

Amansie-Abodom, 186.

Amansie-Abodom, 187.

Amoako, 134.

Anamenako, 42.

Ananta, 3.

Ankobia, 2.

Amoaman, 98.

Ampabame, 144.

Ano Panin, 142.

Anonomsa, 51.

Antoa, 34.

Anwomaso, 99.

Anyinasi, 78.

Apagya, 147.

Apede Drum, 190.

Asaman, 7.

Asaman, 173.

Asante Adankwame, 130.

Asantehene Black Smith, 168.

Asantehene Carrier, 30.

Asantehene Executioner, 27.

Asantehene Nsumankwahene, 114.

Asem, 69.

Asokore-Mampong, 79.

Asokwahene-Batahene, 1.

Asomafo, 76.

Asomfuo, 178.

Asonfuo, 14.

Asonomaso, 155.

Asoromaso, 125.

Asrampong, 4.

Assouwin, 188.

Aswumakuse, 111.

Ataasomanso, 141.

Atasomaso No. 2, 177.

Atene-Akoten, 45.

Atene-Akwapong, 21.

Atipin, 9.

Atutue, 32.

Atwimah, 184.
Atwima Agogo, 135.
Baamu, 91.
Bantama, 39.
Bantama, 40.
Bantama-Baamu, 54.
Baworo, 58.
Bisiase, 105.
Boadu Linguist, 59.
Boakye Yam, 23.
Boakye Yam, 73.
Boaman, 133.
Bohyen, 179.
Bonwire, 148.
Breman, 53.
Busumuru, 174.
Chief Gold Smith, 13.
Dadesoaba, 12.
Danpomu, 92.
Deboase, 65.
Domekyaniago, 150.
Dua-Kyereme, 66.
Duasi, 117.
Ejisu, 11.
Enon, 180.
Esreso, 60.
Esienumpong, 94.
Feyiase, 74.
Fontonfrom, 70.
Fumasua, 85.
Gyamfi, 162.
Gyasi, 15.
Gyebi and Baamuhene, 46.
Gyenyaase, 101.
Heman, 170.
Hia, 154.
Hiawu, 97.
Jakye, 126.
Jakye Linguist, 127.
Juaben, 16.
Juansa, 61.
Kaase, 35.
Kenyaase, 110.
Kodua Tepa, 37.
Kokofu, 44.
Kona, 156.
Koraase, 159.
Kotei, 118.
Kotoko, 146.
Krapa, 189.
Kronko, 100.
Kumasi Nsongo, 112.
Kumasi Wangra, 116.
Kuntanasi, 152.

Kwaduo, 138.
Kwadwom, 25.
Kwaman, 169.
Kwaaso, 123.
Kyekyeretafo, 113.
Kyereme Kodua, 48.
Kyidom, 158.
Kyirapatre, 182.
Mamponten, 64.
Mamprusi Community, 132.
Mansene, 172.
Manso Mim, 129.
Menin Kontiri and Akwam, 31.
Mentia, 57.
Mpaboa-Pamfuo, 36.
Nfante, 68.
Nfensi, 103.
Nkabom, 19.
Nkabom Linguist, 20.
Nkaniasohene, 93.
Nkeanta-Essase, 176.
Nkawie, 102.
Nkofe, 145.
Nkonson, 47.
Nkarwa, 108.
Nkwanta Kese, 136.
Nnobi, 57.
Nsenie, 81.
Nsumankwaa, 22.
Ntonsu, 171.
Ntahera, 26.
Ntutia, 29.
Nyinahin, 107.
Obogu, 55.
Obuokrom, 90.
Odumasi, 63.
Odurogya-Mone, 24.
Ofoase, 82.
Ofoasi-Adumasa, 131.
Ofori and Mansa, 86.
Oforikrom, 163.
Ofuman, 166.
Ohwim, 18.
Okyere-Krom, 122.
Omantiri, 71.
Oyoko, 28.
Oyoko-Breman, 56.
Paakoso, 167.
Pekyi, no. 1, 119.
Saaman, 52.
Safie, 43.
Samankora-Wo-No, 161.
Sanaa, 41.
Sarwua, 87.

Sekyeredumasi, 115.

Some, 83.

Suame, 50.

Suma, 109.

Taahyen, 185.

Toase, 128.

Trede, 149.

Twafuo, 165.

Wawase, 124.

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